

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A STUDY OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR U.S. MILITARY  
APPLICATION: IDENTIFYING MIND/MINEFIELDS AND AVENUES OF  
APPROACH

A THESIS FOR MASTER OF THEOLOGY

BY

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## Preface

Anyone familiar with military strategy is aware of the important role the Calvary plays as scouts during the recon/counterrecon phase of a battle. They have the task of investigating what is referred to as Priority Intelligence Reports. (PIRs) The commander has specified certain PIRs as essential information he needs for success in the battle. The outcome of the battle is often determined by what transpires during this phase. In the Battle of Gettysburg, General Robert E. Lee was severely handicapped because he had not received any reports from his cavalry. In Michael Shaara's book, *Killer Angels*, General James Longstreet describes the impact of this deadly curse of silence: "And the old man (Lee) had faith in Stewart, and why in God's name had Stewart sent nothing. Not even a courier because even Stewart wasn't fool enough to let the whole damned Army of the Potomac get this close without a word, not one damned lonesome word." <sup>1</sup>

When soldiers have a mission which requires them to interact within a different culture, there are certain PIRs that are essential to the success of the mission. Everyone knows the consequence of engaging a trip wire connected to a land mine. Every culture is surrounded by boundaries. These boundaries, like mind/minefields, have trip wires, that when triggered detonate the mine. Cultural boundaries are established on the basis of what is valued by individuals in a particular culture. Such boundaries are mind/minefields and when tripped, have as much potential for human casualty. Just as engineers breach minefields to

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1974).

create avenues of approach, there are ways of penetrating the mind minefields contained within cultural boundaries.

As I anticipate teaching world religions to soldiers who will be entering various cultures it is essential that I make soldiers aware of these mind/minefields and avenues of approach. Learning the fundamentals of various world religions is not adequate. The fundamental belief of a particular religion does not necessarily provide an understanding of how that belief is practiced in a given culture. Religious practice is quite diverse even within the same faith group and varies from culture to culture. Take as an example Sufi Islam. Sufism incorporates many philosophical and spiritual influences, including Christian, Neoplatonic, and others.<sup>2</sup> Both Presbyterians and Pentecostals are Christian Protestants. Imagine the shock of a soldier from another country who studies the beliefs and practice of Presbyterians as an example of main line Protestantism and then attends a Pentecostal service in the mountains of West Virginia. In addition, it is impossible to separate religion, politics, history, customs and the other various components of a culture. In human conduct the various components that influence culture become intertwined.<sup>3</sup> One cannot separate religion from these other components. Edward T. Hall points out that “Americans have tended to compartmentalize religion and reduce its social

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<sup>2</sup> Paul Yachnes, “Sufism: Name and Origin” in *Islamic Studies, Islam, Arabic, and Religion: Sufism -- Sufis -- Sufi Orders*, (Department of Religion University of Georgia Website of Professor Alan Godlas) <http://www.arches.uga.edu>, February 11, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993) 37.

function more than any other people.”<sup>4</sup> In most cultures religion is not viewed as separate from these other components.

What can be accomplished is an extensive examination of one ingredient common to all cultures. I chose cross-cultural communication with a particular focus on blessing and cursing. When I was in the Doctor of Ministry program at Golden Gate Seminary the program director was Dr. Doran McCarty. Dr McCarty’s book *The Inner Heart of Ministry* had a significant impact on my concept of ministry. Dr. McCarty had this to say about blessing: “When we affirm and bless people we are the instruments of God’s grace rather than his appointed judge to determine if they deserved the blessing. We are ministers by our calling (God’s grace) and ministry is ...blessing.”<sup>5</sup> It has been my goal to be a blessing to soldiers and others with whom I come into contact as an Army Chaplain. I am aware that the alternative “cursing” can occur, sometimes unintentionally.

In the spring of 1997 I was walking back to my office from the dining facility at McGovern Base near Brcko, Bosnia. One of my soldiers came up to me and said, “Chaplain there are some guys from JCO (Joint Commission Observers) looking for you. JCO are soldiers who live in civilian towns and make observations for the commanding general. When I arrived at my office two

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<sup>4</sup> Edward T. Hall, “The Organizing Pattern,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874), 76.

<sup>5</sup> Doran C. McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1985), 69.

JCO soldiers were waiting for me. I invited them to come in. They introduced themselves and then explained why they had come to see me. "Chaplain, one of the girls who works with us said that you insulted her father" The previous week I had taken a group of soldiers on a tour of Sebrenc Castle built by Hungarian Magyars sometime around the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. I had told everyone to bring an extra dollar, which was to be given to the tour guide after the tour. I was the first to hand him a dollar when he finished the tour. He looked at the dollar, paused for a moment and handed it back. Seeing that he had refused my dollar, no one else offered him money. What I learned is that in Bosnia the payment for tour guides is done differently. The leader of the group collects the money and gives it to the tour guide. When I handed him only a dollar he interpreted my action as an insult. What I had intended as a blessing was perceived by the tour guide as a curse. From this man's perspective, not only had I taken advantage of him, but I had also done so in an insulting manner. Fortunately we were able to clear up the misunderstanding. The tour guide was paid and the issue was resolved. As an instructor I want to help soldiers to avoid as many mistakes as possible in their interaction with other cultures.

As I contemplated the aspect of culture on which to focus, I noticed the importance of these two concepts in every culture. Blessing and cursing are critical to many of the most important aspects of social interaction. It is appropriate, then, for this study to ask the question, what are the cultural language patterns that reveal blessing and cursing? To bless is to elevate the

status of another by contributing to that individual happiness, well-being, or prosperity. In contrast to blessing, cursing lowers ones perception of himself or herself, or makes a person a victim of evil or misfortune.

As I was working on this thesis I was reading a daily devotional guide called *In His Grip: Foundations for Life & Golf* by Jim Sheard and Wally Armstrong. Sheard and Armstrong provided an interesting insight that explains in part what I am attempting to do with this thesis: "...we search for answers to issues in our own life looking to our most readily available resource, our own experience. We also do not know how to record and utilize the available information."<sup>6</sup> In this thesis I attempt to do just that. To utilize and process many of the events from my own life and experiences in the context of the material presented on this thesis. In observing the class I will be teaching, my predecessor used many examples from his own personal experiences. I believe that analyzing this material in this manner will help me in explaining these concepts as an instructor.

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<sup>6</sup> Sheard, Jim and Wally Armstrong, *In His Grip: Foundations for Life & Golf* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997). 38.

## **I. Introduction**

In 1997 United States Army engineers were supervising Croatian engineers clearing a minefield in an area known as the Posavina Corridor near the Bosnia Croatia border. Unlike American engineers, the Croatians did not mark or map their minefields. The Croatians were scouting an area where they had placed a minefield, which they thought was about 200 yards away. Without a mine map, they entered an unmarked minefield. One of the soldiers hit a trip wire attached to a mine. As a result two soldiers were killed and another critically wounded.

The Army's mission requires soldiers to penetrate cultural boundaries. Entering the boundaries of another culture is like entering a minefield. In order to penetrate cultural boundaries soldiers need a map. They need to know how to identify markers that warn them that they are approaching a mind/minefield. The first purpose of this study is to provide a cultural map to show soldiers where cultural mind/mine fields are located. The second purpose is to show avenues of approach soldiers can use when crossing cultural boundaries. This map will show soldiers the following: how language is utilized in cross-cultural communication, how disinformation leads to misunderstanding; how to recognize various means of non verbal communication; how speech acts serve a unique function in cross cultural communication; how the boundaries of social systems are controlled and mandated from the inside and the outside; and how rituals reinforce and expose cultural boundaries. Following this map should allow



soldiers to conduct cross-cultural missions with a greater degree of confidence and success.

## **II. Cross Cultural Communication**

### **A. The Importance of Cross Cultural Communication**

A culture as defined by John L. Graham, “is a configuration of learned behaviors and results of behavior whose component parts are shared and transmitted by members of a particular society.”<sup>7</sup> One of the most essential components of any culture is communication. Edward T. Hall, who has trained American businessmen working in other cultures, believes that the greatest difficulty in working with people in other countries stems from a lack of knowledge in cross-cultural communications.<sup>8</sup> What makes cross-cultural communication so difficult is that every culture contains a myriad of differences. The thresholds of excitement and the limits of resistance are different in each culture: the impossible effort, the unbearable pain, the preferred drink, and the level of acceptable noise.<sup>9</sup> John L Graham points this out in relation to business transactions: “Cultural differences between joint venture partners and managers can cause divisive, even decisive, problems.”<sup>10</sup> For example frequent interruptions by Brazilian executives are irritating to Americans when they are

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<sup>7</sup> John L. Graham, “Culture, negotiations and international cooperative ventures,” 319.

<sup>8</sup> Hall, “The Organizing Pattern,” 14.

<sup>9</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 179.

<sup>10</sup> Graham, “Culture, negotiations and international cooperative ventures,” 317.

simply conforming to Brazilian norms.<sup>11</sup> Soldiers sometimes experience these frustrations when conducting joint operations with soldiers from other countries. In a joint operation with the Spanish Army our officers became frustrated with the amount of time set aside for leisure activity. The Spanish even had a mobile Cantina set up in their field encampment. But this leisure time which was a cultural norm for the Spanish irritated American Commanders who wanted to utilize more field time for military training.

In business, friction due to cultural misunderstanding often results in increased transaction costs in commercial relationships.<sup>12</sup> Cultural misunderstanding delays the progress of military missions as well. This leads to frustration. John R. Searle offers this advice. "There are no shortcuts. We cannot simply use our imaginations to invent cultural worlds."<sup>13</sup> The first thing soldiers need to remember is that any credible attempt to learn the response of people in a given culture requires time and patience. In our training in preparation for deployment to Bosnia we were told to act as if we were strangers in someone's living room. As you prepare to interact and communicate with other cultures be patient and tread lightly. You are entering a mind/minefield.

Nicholas Sturtevant Nicholas Stamdeart, in his address to the school of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, gave this important advice to those attempting to understand a particular cultural context. The final goal, which one

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<sup>11</sup> Graham, "Culture, negotiations and international cooperative ventures," 334.

<sup>12</sup> Graham, "Culture, negotiations and international cooperative ventures," 334.

should never lose sight of..."is to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world." <sup>14</sup> Failure to grasp another's point of view causes conflict. You may accomplish your intended mission but still be unsuccessful due to poor cultural communication. A good example of this is found in the cross-cultural interaction of Moravian missionary Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalt, one of the first European missionaries in India. Having been raised and educated in the cultural environment of European rationalism, Ziegenbalt believed that through intellectual debate and logic he could convert Hindus to Christianity. Hindus exposed to the intellectual arguments of Ziegenbalt could not defend or contradict them. They saw Christianity as intellectually superior but did not equate this with a need to convert. <sup>15</sup> This difference of cultural perspective is evident in the response of one Hindu to Ziegenbalt: "If our way of worship is considered only outwardly, it may indeed, to an indifferent beholder, seem very ridiculous; but if it is considered in its more spiritual and inward intention, every white man must judge very advantageously of our public way of worship. Those observing must look beyond the surface to the deeper Spiritual Meaning." <sup>16</sup> This statement reflects that in the Indian culture spirituality was more important than rationality. In belittling their religion, Ziegenbalt's rational victory was expressed by this Hindu "Everything that you write and speak

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<sup>13</sup> John R. Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1969) 25.

<sup>14</sup> William C. Strutrevant, Studies in Ethnoscience, " in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874), ??  
Beijeo Singh, *The First Protestant Missionary in India: Bartholomaeus Ziegenbald, 1683-1719*, 137.

<sup>16</sup> Bartholomaeus Ziegenbald, *Thirty-Four Conferences between Danish Missionaries and Malabarian Bramans (or Heathen Priests) in the East Indies, Concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion* (London, 1719), 148.

amounts to contempt and total rejection of our religion and our worship of God.”<sup>17</sup>

This is not the response you want when you complete a cross-cultural mission.

The correct avenue of approach is to grasp and to take into account the point of view of the culture with which you are interacting. How do soldiers grasp the point of view of another culture? The place to begin is language.

## **B. Language**

One critical element of every culture is language. Language is an essential avenue of approach for soldiers crossing cultural boundaries.

Before defining language it is important to make a distinction between language and speech. Speech refers to the actual sound produced by a speaker while language represents shared pattern, which is distinct from what is actually said <sup>18</sup>

This pattern is composed of a set of rules enabling speakers to translate information from the outside world into sound. <sup>19</sup> John R. Searle explains, “Speaking a language is engaging in a rule governed form of behavior.” <sup>20</sup> These rules govern a system of phonetic symbols for the expression of communicable thought and feeling.<sup>21</sup> Often a person is not aware of the language rules they are

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<sup>17</sup> H. Grafe, “Hindu Approaches at the Beginning of the Protestant Mission Era,” *Indian Church History Review* 6 (1972) 43-69, 65.

<sup>18</sup> John J Gumperz, “Introduction,” in *Directions In Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, ed. John J Gumperz and Dale Hymes (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc, 1972) 5.

<sup>19</sup> Gumperz, *Directions In Sociolinguistics*, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Sapir, “Language,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874) 46.

following, or that they are acting according to rules.<sup>22</sup> Levi-Strauss explains, “When we speak, we are not conscious of the syntactic and morphological laws of our language... of the phonemes that we employ to convey different meanings.”<sup>23</sup> These phonetic symbols governed by rules give us the tools or forms we need to communicate with others.<sup>24</sup> Edward Sapir describes language as, “...a great force of socialization, probably the greatest that exists.”<sup>25</sup> Language itself is an important means of socialization even though the content may be as trivial as the small talk at a cocktail party.<sup>26</sup> Language is an essential avenue of approach, but diversity between cultures makes language more difficult.

According to Levi-Strauss all social life is based on universal laws that regulate the unconscious activities of the mind.<sup>27</sup> In a similar way the concepts behind the rules of language are innate and exist cross culturally. This is why we can translate from one language to another.<sup>28</sup> The peculiar characteristics of languages, however, vary according to the cultural views of the peoples of the world.<sup>29</sup> These particular characteristics are critical in relating to other cultures. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, “... language functions, not simply as a device for reporting experience, but also, and more significantly, as a way of

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<sup>22</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 41-42.

<sup>23</sup> Claude Levi-Strauss, “Language and the Analysis of Social Laws,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874), 132.

<sup>24</sup> John R. Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1969) 20.

<sup>25</sup> Edward Sapir, “The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874),

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<sup>26</sup> Sapir, “The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society,” 54.

<sup>27</sup> Levi-Strauss, “Language and the Analysis of Social Laws,” 134.

<sup>28</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 40.

defining experience for its speakers.”<sup>30</sup> This means that human experience and social conduct are interpreted through and integrated with language.<sup>31</sup>

A soldier’s perception of the world is therefore altered by language. For this reason language contains trip wires. For example throughout history different interpretations of scripture have destroyed harmony and union between one sect of Christians and another, and have caused continued wars and frequent bloodshed<sup>32</sup> One of the many reasons for this is a difference in understanding as a result of language. Dr. Andrew Walls explained that the difference of opinion at Council of Calcedon and the controversy over the difference in understanding concerning the divine and human nature of Christ was primarily the result of whether you read the Bible in Greek, Syriac or Coptic.<sup>33</sup> Franz Boas warns that, “A thorough insight into ethnology can not be gained without practical knowledge of language.”<sup>34</sup>

### **C. Disinformation**

Just as language is a source of valuable information it is also a source of damaging misinformation. When the Bismarck departed Norway on her maiden

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<sup>29</sup> Franz Boas, “Introduction to the Handbook of American Indian Languages,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874), 31.

<sup>30</sup> Harry Hoijer, “The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874) 121

<sup>31</sup> Sapir, “The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society,” 49.

<sup>32</sup> Rammohan Roy, “An Appeal to the Christian Public” in *Defense of The Precepts of Jesus* (Calcutta: 1820), 556.

<sup>33</sup> Andrew Walls Class Lecture in “The Churches of Asia” February 13, 2001.

voyage into the Atlantic the ship Captain was told that there were no British Naval vessels in the area. This disinformation eventually proved disastrous. Every commander knows the danger of false reporting. When entering another culture there are several sources of disinformation that soldiers must be aware of.

In some cases personal prejudice that individuals bring, based on distorted information, never allows that individual to obtain an accurate picture of the new culture. A good example of this is found in the novel *At Play in the Fields of the Lord*. This attitude is evident in this description of a missionary, Hazel Quarrier when she meets a national for the first time, in a remote mission outpost, near the South American rain forest. "Hazel was struck by his (the nationals) fierce ugliness, and wondered for the thousandth time how Billy (her son) could be so beautiful.... Yes, she instructed herself, we are surely entering the realm of Satan; we must prepare every defense."<sup>35</sup> Another example of this attitude is evident when Ziegenbalt was asked to remove his shoes to meet with an Indian Holy Man in a Hindu temple. Ziegenbalt refused to take off his shoes and vocalized this curse. "The ground Moses was asked to take his shoes off for was far Holier Ground than the ground whereupon I am present."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Boas, "Introduction to the Handbook of American Indian Languages," 30.

<sup>35</sup> Peter Matthiessen, *At Play in the Fields of Our Lord* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 9.

<sup>36</sup> Beijeoj Singh, *The First Protestant Missionary in India: Bartholomaeus Ziegenbald, 1683-1719*, 142.

It is easy for an outsider to perceive himself/herself as in a blessed state and the culture around him/her as cursed. This, along with a healthy dose of ego, can lead to a feeling of superiority over the culture you are entering. This attitude is reflected in G. M. Theal's *History of the Boers in South Africa*, "In the great 'struggle for survival' the fittest races naturally come out on top. The white race was clearly the great civilizing force in modern history, its expansion overseas a progressive movement bringing civilization to backward people. ... As whites were superior their conquest of others was justified. ... Any barbarian ruler who resisted the progress of civilized neighbors must go under."<sup>37</sup> In the nineteenth century, pictures of Africa used to promote mission work depicted missionaries in Western dress and the "inferior" Africans naked.<sup>38</sup> This language provides an image that is distorted and points to a second source of disinformation, inaccurate reporting, which is often the source of personal prejudice.

An example of poor reporting is found in this account of Sir Richard Burton, who lived in Cairo in the early 19th Century, of domestic life in Egypt: "The men curse one another and beat the women. The women slap and abuse the children, and these in turn cruelly entreat, and use bad language to, the dogs and cats... the Mosques are crowded with sulky grumbling population, making

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<sup>37</sup> Timothy J. Stapleton, *Maqoma: Xhosa Resistance to Colonial Advance 1798-1873* (Johannesburg, Jonathan Bell Publishers, 1994), 28.

<sup>38</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 205.



themselves offensive to one another on earth whilst working their way to heaven."<sup>39</sup> Disinformation between Christians and Muslims has a long history. Jacques Waardenburg, in the Book *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions* gives an excellent summary of the disinformation that exist between these two religious cultures.

“A study of Muslims’ and Christians’ views of each other is largely a story of mutual misunderstanding. Many factors contributed to this, including emotions such as the fear of a superior power, with a foreign religion and ideology, exhibiting strength. Misunderstandings arose especially from the fact that both sides interpreted the other religion in light of their own. Medieval Islam saw Christians as believers gone astray but to be respected as people of the Book; medieval Christianity saw Muslims largely as believers in the wrong things, misled by ignorance. Neither party could adequately place the other’s claims to absolute truth. Whereas Islam had its scholars and mystics to defend its case, Christianity had besides scholars and mystics its ecclesiastical organization, which for better or worse, exercised a great deal of power.”<sup>40</sup>

Disinformation has contributed to the mistrust that exist between Muslims and Western cultures. This study will examine this issue in greater depth in the discussion of boundaries.

In order to avoid disinformation it is important to obtain more than one perspective. Renato Rosaldo suggests, “Social analysts should explore their subjects from a number of positions, rather than any particular one.”<sup>41</sup> When analyzing a cultural environment it is important not to form generalizations based

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<sup>39</sup> Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, (New York, Schuman ,1951), 60.

<sup>40</sup> Jacques Waardenburg, “The Medieval Period:650-1500,” *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey*. ed. Jacques, Waardenburg (NewYork: Oxford University Press, 1999). 46.

on limited observation. If one has negative bias toward a particular society he may apply the negative behavior of one individual to his concept of the whole culture. Many people in India categorized the corrupt behavior of British dock laborers as the typical moral behavior of all Christians.<sup>42</sup> One's understanding may also be inaccurate if one only understands the perspective of a small minority. For example, there were some Indians who felt enlightened by Ziegenbalt's presentation.<sup>43</sup> Due to his desire for the acceptance of his message, it would have been easy for Ziegenbalt to project this enlightenment on others who may not have shared this empathy. When analyzing a culture, be cautious not to over generalize. Obtain as many perspectives as possible.

Sometimes disinformation is deliberate. Disinformation has become a common practice in the American political system. In the 2000 Republican Primary the race between George W. Bush and John McCain was particularly intense in South Carolina. The Bush camp paid for an event in which a leader of a "fringe group" attacked McCain's Senate record on defending veterans' interests. The impact of this disinformation on McCain, a Vietnam veteran and former POW is evident in this response: "I don't know if you can understand, this, George, but that really hurt. That really hurt," McCain said. "You should be ashamed of sponsoring an event with that man there,"<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 169.

<sup>42</sup> Grafe, "Hindu Approaches at the Beginning of the Protestant Mission Era," 53.

<sup>43</sup> Singh, *The First Protestant Missionary in India: Bartholomaeus Ziegenbald, 1683-1719*, 131.

<sup>44</sup> Michael Ferullo and Amy Paulson "In key debate, GOP candidates duel over campaign tactics" (CNN.COM, February 16, 2000) //www.cnn.com/2000/ALLPOLITICS/stories/02/18/cnn.poll, February 21, 2000

It is important for soldiers to be aware that disinformation makes enemies. In this respect disinformation becomes a landmine/mind. Rosaldo in *Culture and Truth* uses an example of the place called the old boys room where males gathered. After gender integration the men felt uncomfortable and some spoke of being silenced. One woman asked, What exactly do you want to say about me? What have you become used to saying about me that you feel inhibited about saying in my presence?" <sup>45</sup> Rosaldo poses the question, "Have such people become accustomed to saying hateful things with impunity because the people spoken about are not in the room?" You trip a land mine/mind if others suspect that you have been spreading damaging information about them to others. This is especially true for those conducting psychological warfare. If people discover you have spread false rumors and exaggerated truth you may trigger an unexpected land mine/mind.

Members of the Ilongot culture in the Philippines, when visiting the home of a neighbor they enter in silence. They do not speak until asked by their host, "Are you people from there well?" When asked to explain this custom one man answered, "If you talk, the others will think you're talking about them." <sup>46</sup> The Ilongot's demonstrate great caution to restrain from using language that propagates bad information. Soldiers should use the same caution.

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<sup>45</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, xii.

<sup>46</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 114.

## D. Blessing and Cursing

Language itself is too broad a subject to analyze in depth. For this reason this study will focus on language that performs the function Blessing and Cursing. Disinformation is language which curses. Language can also be used to bless. When language is used to bless it opens avenues of approach. When language is used to curse it creates mind/minefields.

Blessing and cursing are outside influences, which impact an individual's right perception of their status in both internal and external relationships.<sup>47</sup> Edward Sapir identifies two categories of functional behavior: "Many functions of behavior are primarily in the sense that an individual organic need, such as the satisfaction of hunger, is being fulfilled, but often the functional side of behavior is either entirely transformed or, at the least, takes on a new increment of significance."<sup>48</sup> Blessing and cursing fall into the latter category. Both blessings and cursing have the power to transform lives. Blessing is the power to heal; broken hearts and shattered spirits can be healed through blessing.<sup>49</sup> In contrast, cursing has the power to inflict misery and pain, the capacity to destroy.

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<sup>47</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966),139.

<sup>48</sup> Edward Sapir, "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society," 35.

<sup>49</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 64.

This is evident in the curse of God on Adam and Eve in Genesis 3: 17-19: “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it. ...it will produce thorns and thistles...until you return to the ground... for dust you are and to dust you will return.”<sup>50</sup> The desire to be blessed and the fear of being cursed have a critical impact on many of the most important aspects of social interaction. A blessing enhances status in a relationship. When one is cursed, their status is lowered.

Blessing is defined as something promoting or contributing to happiness, well being, or prosperity. People look to religion as a source of blessing. John G. Gager in his book *Kingdom and Community* points out that religion is what justifies and explains our human existence and what gives meaning and value to our lives.<sup>51</sup> Religion blesses when it offers hope to the downtrodden and the disenfranchised. Millennium Cults, for example offer to their converts the promise of heaven on earth and the overthrow or reversal of the present social order.<sup>52</sup> A second meaning of blessing is to invoke divine favor upon someone or something. “In the O.T. we find blessing as the source of all good things and the withdrawal of blessing as the source of all dangers.”<sup>53</sup> God’s presence is associated with blessing. A divine encounter is a form of blessing. The Apostle Paul had a vision of the risen Lord. This encounter became the exclusive basis

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<sup>50</sup> Genesis 3.17-19 NIV (The New International Version)

<sup>51</sup> John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1975), Prentice Hall Studies in Religion Series, ed. John P. Reeder, Jr. and John F. Wilson, . 10.

<sup>52</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 21.

<sup>53</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 50.

for the legitimacy of Paul's authority and status as an apostle.<sup>54</sup> Ordination implies a blessed status. "Blessing" attempts to raise an individual or a group to a higher or more gratifying state of existence. Cursing is the opposite of blessing. Alan Macfarlane associates cursing with an attack on persons or a society which is either motiveless or an attack in which the motives are perverted. Curses are evil because their intent is to destroy integrity, happiness and the welfare of normal society.<sup>55</sup> A person or a group of people who are cursed are reduced to an undesirable status or loathsome state of existence. Where the blessing is withdrawn and the power of the curse unleashed there is barrenness, pestilence, and confusion.<sup>56</sup>

Doran McCarty describes the desire for blessing and the escape from the curse in Genesis 3:14 as a critical life long quest for humanity. In the Bible humanity is cursed in Gen. 3:14: "Ever since then humanity has tried to rid itself of the curse, receives the blessing of God, and return to the former blessed state."<sup>57</sup> Blessing and cursing are certainly an integral part of the universal psyche of mankind. In reflecting on my experiences in various cultures and in the study of many cultures in the preparation of this Thesis, I found no culture where the desire for blessing and the fear of cursing were not important. Blessings and curses contain the power to alter lives. Blessing and cursing are key concepts in opening avenues of approach and avoiding mind/minefields.

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<sup>54</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 71.

<sup>55</sup> Alan Macfarlane, "The Root of All Evil," in *The Anthropology of Evil*, ed. David Parkin, (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc. 1985), 14.

<sup>56</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 50.

### III. Non-Verbal Communication

#### A. Symbols

Symbols create a structure of meanings in which individuals can relate to one another and realize their own ultimate purposes.<sup>58</sup> One of the most common uses of symbols is in the practice of religion. Religion has to do with finding ultimate meaning in life and is a fair representation of the social reality of a particular culture.<sup>59</sup> While a student at Princeton Theological Seminary my family visited the Princeton Alliance Church. The Symbols observed during this visit communicated a great deal of information about this church. There were the obvious symbols such as cross and a dove which indicated a Christian church and an empty cross which symbolized a protestant church. The podium was in the center of the altar symbolizing that the emphasis of worship was on preaching and not the Eucharist. The podium was also transparent so that it did not serve as a barrier between the minister and the congregation. The absence of the use of symbols in the service indicated an emphasis on sin as an internal state of mind as opposed to formal acts of wrongdoing.<sup>60</sup> The content of the

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<sup>57</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 62.

<sup>58</sup> Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols; Explorations in Cosmology* (New York, Vintage Books, 1973), 73.

<sup>59</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 110

<sup>60</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 27.

message indicated a restricted code where self worth is found in living by rules as opposed to social action.<sup>61</sup>

The symbols of greatest interest to me, in this particular church were those from the business world; contemporary background music when you entered the sanctuary, power point presentations during the worship service, the social area where parishioners gathered before the service, had a close resemblance to a Starbucks Coffee Shop. It was obvious that this church was composed of business executives. In addition to the religious symbols it contained symbols that identified the church with the Princeton business community. With my knowledge of religious symbols and my familiarity with the symbols of the business world I was able to gain a great deal of knowledge about this church and its parishioners from one short visit. All of this information was communicated to me through non-verbal symbols. This demonstrates how soldiers can gain information about another culture through symbols.

This study discussed how there are universal mental concepts innate in every culture, but that the expression of these concepts varies from culture to culture. This is true of symbols as well. In most Western cultures, where diamonds are valued, a diamond ring has come to symbolize a marriage commitment. In Xhosa society where cattle are valued the marriage commitment is symbolized by the bride drinking the milk of a cow from the husband's family.

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<sup>61</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 57-58.



The bride is not officially married until she drinks the milk.<sup>62</sup> The meanings of symbols are unique to a particular culture and must be understood within the cultural context of that particular culture. A Swastika displayed in Europe in the 1940s certainly would not have the same meaning in India where it is a religious symbol in Hinduism.

The use of symbols can be landmine/minds or avenues of approach. The Baptist sign in front of my office in Innsbruck was a landmine for many Austrians. Baptists are labeled as a foreign sect group in Austria. People entered my office with caution. But when I carried my green and black Innsbruck flag to soccer games I was received as an insider. The soccer flag was a symbol that provided an avenue of approach.

Soldiers need to be aware that symbols can be volatile. In Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart* the construction of a church with the symbol of a cross on top brought this reaction from a leader in the local culture. "This shrine which he (the missionary) built must be destroyed. We shall no longer allow it in our midst. It has bred untold abominations and we have come to put an end to it."<sup>63</sup> A symbol can mean different things to different people. A good example of this is the Confederate Flag. To many raised in Southern culture it is a symbol of cultural pride. For many raised in African-American culture it is a

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<sup>62</sup> Harold Scheub, *The World and the Word: Tales and Observations from the Xhosa Oral Tradition* (Madison: Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 281.

<sup>63</sup> Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), 190.

symbol for slavery. This is why the display of this symbol has resulted in so much controversy.

The significance of symbolism was evident in the Surrender of General Cornwallis to General Washington at Yorktown. At that time it was a tradition called the “Honors of War” for the defeated army to leave the battlefield with their flags unfurled, playing a march of the victorious army. Following the defeat at Charlestown of General Benjamin Lincoln, the British General Henry Clinton denied this honor to the defeated rebel colonist. One of the conditions of the surrender at Yorktown was that the British Army would be subjected to the same humiliation the Americans had experienced at Charlestown.<sup>64</sup>

## **B. Gestures**

Symbols made with the human body are called gestures. When I attended air assault school there were certain gestures we had to know to complete the course. Because of the loud noise of the helicopter engines it was necessary to use earplugs. This made verbal communication impossible. This necessitated the use of gestures which were clearly understood as an essential communication tool in conducting successful air assault missions.

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<sup>64</sup> Gerald James Larson, *India's Agony Over Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 45.

Gestures when understood by the initiator and the receiver have a powerful ability to bless or to curse.<sup>65</sup> Blessing is the intent behind many ritualized religious gestures. A good example is a Roman Catholic priest making the sign of the cross to the congregation.<sup>66</sup> A Non-verbal gesture is used in this ritual blessing to support verbal speech. The raising of the hand of a minister while performing a baptism in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost reinforces the verbal blessing with a gesture. Curses can also be executed using gestures. In Bosnia holding up two fingers in a manner that is very similar to the “hook um horns” symbol at the University of Texas, is a curse for Muslims. It is the symbol for Serbian Nationalism. The most common symbolic curse using a gesture in American culture is the lifting of the middle finger. The German equivalent looks very similar to the American gesture for OK. A friend of mine was flirting with a German girl in the car in front of ours during a *stow*(traffic jam) on the Autobahn. In the frost, on the back window, the girl wrote “Wie Gates”, a common German greeting. My friend responded with the American symbol for OK. Needless to say my friend did not receive the response from the girl he desired. Soldiers need to be as familiar with the meaning of gestures in cultures they enter .

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<sup>65</sup> George Herbert Mead, “Relation of Mind to Response and Environment,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874) 106.

<sup>66</sup> Benjamin Lee Whorf, “The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874),” 83.

## C. Environment

### 1. The Influence of Environment on Communication

It is essential to understand how cross-cultural communication is shaped by the environment in which it occurs. “The meaning of a sentence is tied via intention to such things as beliefs and perception, which in turn, depend on background assumptions.”<sup>67</sup> Language is often correctly understood only within the environmental context in which it is given. For example the meaning of the clause “the cat is on the mat” does not have the same meaning in outer space where gravity does not exist and there is no up-and-down orientation. “The cat is on the mat” does not have a clear application unless we make some further assumptions,” based on the environmental framework.<sup>68</sup> A promise may have different meaning when it is delivered in the setting of a used car lot.<sup>69</sup> The environment changes the meaning. If an instructor in a military class made a profound statement and I yelled out Hooah! Everyone would understand my response as an affirmation of what the instructor had just stated. Other soldiers yelling Hooah might join me! Were I to give the same response to a profound statement made in Chapel at Princeton Theological Seminary, everyone would look at me like I was from another planet.

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<sup>67</sup> Jerrold J. Katz, “Literal Meaning and Logical Theory” in *Speech Acts, Meaning and Intentions: Critical approaches to the Philosophy of John R. Searle*, ed Armin Burkardt (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990),245.

<sup>68</sup> Katz, “Literal Meaning and Logical Theory”,243.

Certain environments can also enhance blessing and cursing. A beautiful church building with stained glass windows, candles and incense create an environment for blessing. I have often felt blessed gazing in awe at the splendor of a gothic Cathedral. A memorable blessing occurred during my first visit to the Notre Dame Cathedral. Organ music was playing in the background as I gazed in awe at the large circular stained glass window. A prison environment can create an environment that is a curse. A prisoner gave this description of his prison cell. "At the dead of night the rays of the moon flowed brightly through the bars waking him from sleep. The darkness was thick and deep." <sup>70</sup>

Military Planners are well aware of the importance of environment. When Madeline Albright visited McGovern Base in May of 1997, great detail went in to the planning of the decorating and seating arrangement for the meal at which she would address our soldiers. During the planning someone asked, "What if she wants to freshen up after lunch?" The portable latrines used by our soldier's were not considered a proper environment for the Secretary of State. Sergeant Brown was assigned the responsibility of immaculately cleaning out a connex. SGT Brown worked for two weeks solid. He traveled a days journey to Zagreb to buy a full-length mirror. There were none available in the area that had not been broken. When the luncheon was over, our commander asked Madeline Albright if she would like to freshen up. She replied, "No, I'm fine."

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<sup>69</sup> Claudia Mithchell-Kernan, "Signifying and Marking: Two Afro-American Speech Acts," in *Directions In Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, ed. John J Gumperz and Dale Hymes, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc, 1972). ??

When conducting any activity in another culture you want to consider the impact environment may have on the success or failure of the mission.

## **2. Categories of environment**

One of the ways cultures create order is to classify their visual cultural surroundings into discrete categories of environment e.g. home, holy building, public square, school, etc <sup>71</sup> This classification varies from culture to culture. In identifying these structures, you find similarities and differences among cultures. Some cultures are not homogeneous to a specific culture but border on more than one culture. <sup>72</sup> There are no single classifications that fit every environment. One of the designated categories for some African societies might be the evil forest. Its function is noted in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*: "when a man was afflicted with swelling in the stomach and the limbs, he was not allowed to die in the house. He was carried to the "evil forest" and left there to die." The "evil forest" is an example of an environmental classification that has the effect of a curse. Imagine the response if a Civil Affairs team making a visit approached a village from the "evil forest." There are certain areas and holy sites that are sacred or forbidden. These areas are land mine/minds. The wrong person (or in some cases anyone entering a particular site or holy building) might trigger a

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<sup>70</sup> Shusaku Endo, *Silence*, trans. William Johnston (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1969), 128.

<sup>71</sup> Gumperz, "Introduction," *Directions In Sociolinguistics*, 15.

<sup>72</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 207.

hostile response. An excellent example of this curse is in the movie *Jeremiah Johnson*, when Jeremiah curses the Indians by leading a US Calvary squadron across an Indian burial ground. They respond to his curse by destroying his home and murdering his family. In Bosnia General Order #1 forbid American soldier from going inside of a Mosque. In an emotionally charged environment holy places often become landmines/minds. One of the major crises in the Nation of India today is related to the destruction of the *Babri Masjid* a Muslim Mosque by fundamentalist Hindus who want to construct a Hindu Temple over the site where the Mosque stood.<sup>73</sup>

Another environmental classification that appears to be innocent but carries the potential to bless and curse is the classification, “home.” Rosaldo points out that “Culture requires study from a number of perspectives, and that these perspectives cannot necessarily be added together into a unified summation.”<sup>74</sup> This is certainly true for the environmental classification of home. “Home” in the United States would normally be the residence of a nuclear family. When I lived in German culture I discovered that home is much more likely to include extended family, especially in rural areas. In some African cultures home would be a designated area that contains a separate hut for each wife and her children.

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<sup>73</sup> Larson, *India's Agony Over Religion*, 227.

<sup>74</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 93.

The word “home” as an environmental classification is often associated with a place where you receive a blessing. This blessing is expressed in the song, *I’ll be home for Christmas*. Not being home, as every soldier who has been deployed over Christmas knows, is difficult. Palestinian refugees in Gaza and Muslim refugees in Brka Bosnia live with the perlocutionary awareness of the curse of not being home. In 1997, in the Muslim refugee town of Brka, Bosnia, an elderly man noticed that I was the officer in charge of a visitation mission we were conducting in the town. He approached me and through my interpreter asked me when he could return to his home in Brcko. All I could tell him was that I did not know. Every time I remember this incident I feel empathy for the pain I saw in this man’s face as he turned and walked away.

Empathy created in some environmental settings can be communicated to other locations by the media. An excellent example is the empathy felt for homeless migrant workers in California by those who read John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath* or looked at the photographs of Dorothea Lange. During the Vietnam War empathy for soldiers killed and wounded in the war was conveyed through the TV sets in the United States. The military has leaned through this to make every effort to win the empathy of the press for their cause. For soldiers the environment created by the military is an important concern.

Soldiers need to be aware that wearing a military uniform can create an environmental barrier that can block avenues of approach with some people.



While I was touring The National Park Service Immigration Museum at Ellis Island, with my family, it was pointed out that some of the immigrants were afraid of the attendants because they wore uniforms. Many immigrants had learned, in the countries they came from, to fear uniforms. In Bosnia soldiers were assisting with an orphanage in the Tuzla area. There was a little boy about six years old who would not come near any soldier in uniform. During the war Serbian soldiers had ethnically cleansed his village. As he and his father stood with their backs to a firing squad his father told him to drop to the ground when he heard the first shot and not to move until the soldiers were gone. The boy lay on the ground for several hours underneath his dead father. Environment alone is a key component of communication.

#### **D. Silence**

One of the most interesting types of non-verbal behavior is silence. Silence can be a blessing or a curse. An example of a silent curse is the wife who refuses to speak to her husband or vice versa. Another form of silence is not speaking of things that are painful. "People often shield themselves by not talking about death and other people's bereavement."<sup>75</sup> Renato Rosaldo describes this curse in his book *Culture and Truth* in the words of Pamela Mang, whose daughter Jessica died of cancer. Pamela describes the perlocutionary impact of the curse of silence "One of the most profound insights I got out of Jessica's illness was that most of us try to protect ourselves from disasters and

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<sup>75</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 55.

difficulties, and that we miss a lot of life because of that ... Oh God you want to just get it out and talk about it , because somehow getting it out into the air makes it something of a size that is manageable, that you can handle.”<sup>76</sup>

My uncle was killed in the Normandy Invasion. My grandfather refused to allow anyone in the home to mention his death. There was no funeral or memorial service. No one was allowed to grieve. In 1994 I went with my mother to visit her brother's grave at the Normandy Cemetery. When we were about a mile from the cemetery my mother asked me to stop the car. She got out and picked some wild flowers growing beside the road. She explained that in her last letter to her brother she had enclosed pressed wild flowers. It was not until my mother laid the flowers on her brother's grave that she broke the fifty-year curse of silence by breaking into tears. Soldiers need to avoid the curse of silence. Chaplains conduct a critical incident debriefing when soldiers have observed something traumatic. This gives everyone a chance to talk and break the curse of silence. One of the most important elements of the briefings I have conducted is allowing soldiers to break the curse of silence and allow soldiers to talk about what happened.

The difficulty of Cultural readjustment can be amplified when one has experiences a traumatic event while crossing boundaries. Within a period of five years, I deployed to Bosnia and Macedonia five times and spent over a year in the Balkans. Much of the time that I was not there I was reading about the region

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<sup>76</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 56.

including vivid descriptions of the many atrocities that occurred there. I remember vividly the face of a young Bosnian captain from Brcko who described to me how his father and uncle had been placed into a small house with many of the men from his neighborhood and beaten to death with hatchets and crow bars. The only reason he was spared was because they knew he was a soldier and could be used in a prisoner exchange. They locked his wife in a local hotel room, where Serbian soldiers raped her whenever they desired. I counseled with soldiers who had watched the obliteration of the two Croatian Engineers who tripped a land mine in the Posavina Corridor. I conducted a critical incident debriefing soldiers who saw a young Muslim teenager lose his leg when he stepped on an anti-personal mine. I counseled with soldiers who's comrade choose to end his life with a .9 millimeter on the alter of the Chapel at Eagle Base. You learn to shut it all out because in that environment you cannot really deal with it. It was not until I was out of the military environment and in the serenity of the environment at Princeton Seminary that I was able to let it all out and deal with my own trauma which I went through helping others cope with their trauma. I bring this up in the context of this paper because when soldiers cross cultural boundaries they sometimes experience traumatic events. Part of the reintegration process is helping soldiers to cope with the curse of silence.

## E. Unconscious behavior

Another expression of nonverbal language, unconscious behavior, can occur because individuals “have found it easiest and aesthetically most satisfactory to pattern their conduct in accordance with more or less clearly organized forms of behavior for which no one is individually responsible.”<sup>77</sup> Non-verbal communication like bowing and saluting communicate respect. In Japan, everyone bows as a greeting. Bowing shows respect, when a Mullah enters a building in Iran.<sup>78</sup> Many physical actions are the result of social learning and response.<sup>79</sup> Repetitive actions like bowing practiced since childhood can easily become unconscious behavior.<sup>80</sup> When we fail to recognize status with the expected gesture of blessing, the result is cursing. Such a failure can create a potentially volatile situation. A chaplain who has just delivered a death notification and is deep in thought passes a general without saluting. A volatile response is likely when an expectation that relates to status is not honored. Failing to bow can have severe negative consequences. The importance of an unconscious behavior in one culture may not be the recognized norm or may be misinterpreted in another. In Japan lack of eye contact is normal, but is perceived by Americans as secrecy or even dishonest.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Sapir, “The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society,” 44.

<sup>78</sup> Roy Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet : Religion and Politics in Iran* (New York : Pantheon Books, 1985), 33.

<sup>79</sup> Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 73.

<sup>80</sup> Sapir, “The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society,” 35.

<sup>81</sup> John L. Graham, “Culture, negotiations and international cooperative ventures,” 334.

While training to be a missionary, I was told a story of an unconscious non-verbal misunderstanding. A missionary couple from the Philippines, on furlough in the United States, was told by their daughter's first grade teacher that she was often unresponsive when asked to answer a question. Further investigation revealed that this was not true. In the Philippines lifting your eyelids is a common way of saying yes. Whenever the teacher asked a question requiring a yes answer, the child would simply lift her eyelids.

Important communication takes place through unconscious behavior. After you have lived in another culture for a period of time you will pick up some of these unconscious behaviors automatically. When I first came back from Austria I sometimes noticed Americans backing away from me because in Europe the body distance of separation when talking is closer. But when you first enter a culture you will likely be unaware of unconscious behavior. It is a form of non-verbal language you will need to learn. Look for signs such as body distance, touch, facial expressions, social interaction with persons in authority, social interaction between males females, ect. These are the indicators of unconscious behavior.

## **IV. Non-Verbal Communication**

### **A. Implicit Language**

#### **1.Code Words**

Culture exists on two levels: that which is visible and easy to describe; and covert which is not visible and difficult even for the trained observer.<sup>82</sup> Particular words, phrases, types of language, and ways of speaking become associated with certain nationalities, political entities vocations, fraternities, etc. "Each of these tends to develop peculiarities of speech which have the symbolic function of somehow distinguishing the group into which its members might be too completely absorbed."<sup>83</sup> It is common for groups to develop a restricted code which shortens the process of communication by condensing units into prearranged coded forms. These codes shape the structure of interaction.<sup>84</sup> Language forms unique to the identity of the group such as code words and symbols emerge. The "hook um horns" sign familiar to all college football fans emerged in the University of Texas Community. I worked at a Southern Baptist mountaineering camp in the Blue Ridge Mountains for seven summers. In this fraternal environment we developed many language features unique to the group. Zitflitters, bacon stretchers, and wild bull chipmunks, terms unknown by the world outside the camp were a part of our daily lives. In like manner many

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<sup>82</sup> Hall, "The Organizing Pattern," 85.

<sup>83</sup> Sapir, "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society," 53.

cultures use code words that make no sense unless you understand the code. This will be true of the cultures you interact with.

In the Xhosa society of South Africa when the groom's party comes in search of a bride they ask for a spear.<sup>85</sup> Code words often have deep symbolic or psychological meaning. When a Swazi king dies, the death is kept secret. The people who knew him will say, "He is busy." If his death were known the whole country would be vulnerable. This illusion remains until a new king is installed. In other parts of Africa, it is common to say when a king dies: "it is night," "the house is broken," "a mighty tree has been uprooted," "a mountain has fallen," "he has entered the vault of the skies." No one mentions death.<sup>86</sup> When there is a void in leadership the stability of the entire culture is at risk. This example makes obvious the importance of code words.

All soldiers are familiar with the use of military acronyms which in our world act as code words. The uniqueness of this code language is evident in the fact that military spouses often do not understand what their husbands are talking about when they talk about their work. One of my responsibilities as a Chaplain was to lead a seminar called "Married to the Military" for new military spouses. One of the classes was designed to teach some of the most frequently used acronyms that would improve communication between military couples. As a

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<sup>84</sup> Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 77.

<sup>85</sup> Harold Scheub, *The World and the Word: Tales and Observations from the Xhosa Oral Tradition* (Madison: Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992). 273.

chaplain I was required to provide religious coverage for many types of units. With each change of location I had to learn new acronyms to be able to communicate in addition to the acronyms, which were understood army wide. Engineers for example used code words which I had never heard as a tanker chaplain. As soldiers we understand the success of the mission depends on soldiers understanding the meaning of code words. Code words are equally important when you cross cultural boundaries.

Code words are usually held in great affection by the group who uses them. One should be cautious in using them as an outsider. While the group may not want an outsider using their terms, this speech act can be helpful in crossing boundaries. Language used only inside the boundary can create a sense of identity with the group which gives the outsider a blessed status. This status becomes an avenue of approach with the group. A total stranger gains more status at a University of Texas football game if he gives the “hook um horns” sign. In Bosnia the greeting “God is great” *Allah Immanent* is only used by Muslims. I found that my status was enhanced significantly with Muslims when I used that greeting. I also had to be cautious. There is no way of telling a Muslim from a Serbian or Croat by physical appearance. To say “Allah Immanent” to a Serbian or Croatian could trip a wire. Cautious use of code words unique to the group can be an effective avenue of approach. Careless use can trip a landmine/mind.

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<sup>86</sup> Edward Geoffrey Parrinder, *African traditional religion* (New York: Hutchinson's University Library, 1954).75-76.



## 2. Non-Casual Speech

Another form of implicit communication is a non-casual utterance. Poetry is an example of a non-casual utterance. Characteristics of non-casual utterances include: a set language form like a chant; a particular place appropriate for delivery; a particular person to deliver the utterance; and a particular time when it is uttered.<sup>87</sup> A formal utterance has certain guidelines such as who is allowed to make the utterance. It may be limited to certain circumstances. When a non-casual utterance is made outside of these guidelines the result is either shocking or humorous.<sup>88</sup> Reciting a love poem to your spouse would be an appropriate use of a non-casual utterance. Reciting it to your boss would not.

This story points out another issue. What appears as a casual remark, may not be as casual or as optional as it seems. In a joint field training exercise near Zaragoza, Spain, I was the lunch guest of a Spanish brigade chaplain. After lunch the brigade commander asked me if I would like to have a drink with him. His utterance though posed a question was a speech act of commanding that was neither casual nor optional. I explained that I would like to, but made him aware that American soldiers were not allowed to drink alcohol during training

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<sup>87</sup> Carl F. Voeglin, "Casual and Noncasual Utterances Within Unified Structure," in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1974) 182.

<sup>88</sup> Voeglin, "Casual and Noncasual Utterances Within Unified Structure," 182.

exercises. His response, “ I have special permission from your general. You will drink!” I complied without further comment.

This is a good example of how soldiers should react to implicit communication. Implicit communication needs to be clarified. My perception of his remark was that I had an option to accept or reject his request to join him in a drink. Believing that by accepting his invitation I would be in violation of Army policy I concluded that I should decline his offer, however I felt that I should explain to him why. His response cleared up the ambiguity. Suppose I had simply refused his invitation based on my assumption. My rejection of his invitation would have been an insult. This is a critical issue in cross-cultural communication. You do not want to walk through a mine/minefield in a state of ambiguity. Whenever you sense ambiguity you need to ask for clarification. Implicit language is dangerous. Clarification can open the avenue of approach to get soldiers safely through this minefield.

## **V. Speech Acts**

### **A. The Definition of a Speech Act**

Language can be broken down into component parts called “speech acts” I defined “speech acts” in “An Analysis of the Impact of the Speech Acts of Blessing and Cursing in Shusaku Endo’s Silence.” The same outline is used, but

it has been rearranged and altered to fit the context of this study. Speech acts involve a series of analytic connections between what the speaker means, what the sentence intends, what the hearer understands, and the over all result after the analytic connection has occurred.<sup>89</sup> For example, the clause, “Is John sitting down,” is a linguistic speech act of questioning.<sup>90</sup> Speech acts are divided into various categories including questioning, thanking, advising, warning, greeting, and congratulating.<sup>91</sup> The speech act is the paradigm behind the word, not the word itself. For example, if you say “I promise I will punish you if you do such and such,” the statement would be defined as a speech act of threatening not promising.<sup>92</sup>

## **B. Illocutionary Speech Acts.**

Blessing is a speech act. The two most ritualized ways of offering a blessing are greetings and the benedictions.<sup>93</sup> An example of a speech act of blessing is found in the benediction “Go in Peace,” used by many ministers at the end of a worship service. This blessing has its origin in the Hebrew greeting *Shalom*, which is also a blessing.<sup>94</sup> The Arabic equivalent “God is blessed” *Barakallahulaka* is a common greeting for Muslims.<sup>95</sup> For “go in peace” to be

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<sup>89</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 21.

<sup>90</sup> Barry Smith, “Towards a History of Speech Act Theory”, *Speech Acts, Meaning and Intentions: Critical approaches to the Philosophy of John R. Searle*, ed Armin Burkardt (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990) 36.

<sup>91</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, Pp 66-67.

<sup>92</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 68.

<sup>93</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 65.

<sup>94</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 65.

<sup>95</sup> Roy Mottahedeh, 17.

defined as a speech act, the minister understands that the intent of the words he has uttered is to bless the congregation. Speech acts may involve understanding on the part of the speaker of his role or responsibility in relation to the utterance. Take for example the speech act of promising. Promise involves the notion of the speaker's undertaking an obligation and also reference to a future act, relative to the speech point, in which the speaker is the agent.<sup>96</sup> A minister using this blessing in worship understands that "go in Peace" is a divine blessing. He is simply the mediator between God and the congregation. The words "go in peace" must also be understood by congregation as a blessing. People believe God will bless them through their minister.<sup>97</sup> For an utterance to be a speech act the hearer or hearers must recognize the utterance, know its meaning and understand the circumstance or conditions in which the speech act is used.<sup>98</sup> This is defined as an illocutionary act. The effect on the hearer of an illocutionary act "consists simply in the hearer understanding the utterance of the speaker."<sup>99</sup> In the example above both the minister and the congregation understand that the words "go in peace" constitutes a divine blessing. This same principle obviously applies with speech acts of cursing. If an angry soldier feels he has been betrayed by his squad and says, "I hope you all rot in Hell." This would be understood by his peers as a curse. If however this same statement were made to a Hindu, who views hell as a temporary state of existence then the statement

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<sup>96</sup> Jerrold J. Katz, "Literal Meaning and Logical Theory," 230.

<sup>97</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 60.

<sup>98</sup> Searle, *Speech Acts*, 21.

<sup>99</sup> John F. Crosby, "Speech Act Theory and Phenomenology" *Speech Acts, Meaning and Intentions: Critical approaches to the Philosophy of John R. Searle*, ed Armin Burkardt (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990) 65.

may not have the same effect. If one gives a blessing or cursing that is not understood as such by the hearer, then it is not a speech act.

This is certainly an issue in any type of interaction with another culture. The importance of this simple concept for military operations is enormous. In communicating with another culture you must constantly ask, will this person or persons understand what I am saying. Having an interpreter does not automatically solve this problem. While I was serving as the Eagle Base chaplain in Bosnia in 1999, my commander would sometimes ask me to critique his interaction with nationals. I was observing a meeting of local mayors discussing the reconstruction of a highway between Tuzla and Brcko. Since the road crossed the Zone of Separation (ZOS) between the two former warring factions, the project would involve American, Bosnian, Russian and Serbian soldiers. The political significance of this project, the first military project involving corporation between these former enemies, is obvious. In suggesting a certain procedure for the repair of one section of the road, my commander made the statement, "You get more bang for the buck that way." I watched with amusement as several translators stared with bewilderment in their attempt to interpret this phrase, which would easily have been understood in my commander's native state of Texas.

### C. Perlocutionary Speech Acts.

The meaning of speech act involves more than just the language and the understanding of the language. A sentence has meaning when the hearer understands an utterance of words in the same manner that the speaker intends those words to be understood.<sup>100</sup> Although an example is symbolic substitute for a direct experience, it cannot be divorced from the psychological impact in the communication process. Language thus has the power to induce a powerful psychological reaction.<sup>101</sup> Certain catchwords, slogans, and rallying cries have hypnotic power.<sup>102</sup> When the meaning of the words has a powerful impact on the reader, this is known as a perlocutionary act. For example, telling a ghost story late at night, may accomplish the perlocutionary act of frightening a child.<sup>103</sup> It is this power that make speech acts such a powerful communication tool. When you know what words to say to get the perlocutionary impact you want in a given culture this creates a powerful avenue of approach. A perlocutionary success occurs when a speaker intends what the utterance achieves in an addressee. Perlocutionary failure is a lack of success in achieving an intended perlocutionary effect.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> . Katz, "Literal Meaning and Logical Theory", 254.

<sup>101</sup> Edward Sapir, "Language", 49-51.

<sup>102</sup> Benjamin Lee Whorf, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language, 67.

<sup>103</sup> Dictionary of Philosophical Terms and Names,  
<http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/p2.htm#perl>; Internet

<sup>104</sup> Dictionary of Philosophical Terms and Names, Internet

Blessing and cursing are speech acts which have a psychological impact on both the speaker and the listener. Let's suppose that the minister mentioned earlier has been the pastor of this congregation for over twenty years and this is his last Sunday. When he utters, "Go in peace," his voice breaks with emotion. Tears begin to form in the eyes of many in the congregation. In this circumstance the speech act of blessing has a profound perlocutionary impact on the congregation. Another example of this perlocutionary impact of blessing was found in a note written to me by the spouse of a soldier with whom I had been involved in marriage counseling. "Chaplain Reynolds, I just wanted to say thank you! I never knew that the words "I forgive you" could change my life so drastically. God used you to change my life and our marriage." The words of this note, indicating that God had used me to bless her life, had the perlocutionary impact of a blessing on me. One of the most powerful blessings a minister can experience is the awareness that God has used your life to bless the life of another. Dr. McCarty points out: "Blessing can change the life of the one who blesses."<sup>105</sup>

Just as speech acts of blessing have a perlocutionary impact, so do curses. Children chant the rhyme "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me." This fabled expression is just not true. For most people the deepest wounds they carry are from things that have been said to them or about them. There is a story in the Ras Shamra tablets in which a father

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<sup>105</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 66.

throws his son on the ground so the curses of the enemy will pass over him.<sup>106</sup>

Curses are like bullets. Once a curse has been uttered, the damage is done.

You can not reverse the pain. War is a speech act of cursing. The

perlocutionary effect is powerful: may you perish from the face of the earth!

## **V. The Functions of Communication**

### **A. Boundaries**

Between August of 1977 and July of 1979 I served as a missionary journeyman with the Southern Baptist Convention in Innsbruck, Austria. I was working under the supervision of career missionaries Bill and Sally Wagner. Due to an accident involving Bill's mother, the Wagners returned to the United States. I was left in charge of the mission station. For ten months I was totally immersed in Austrian culture. During this time I kept a diary. I remember well an entry I made about half way through this period: "I know I will never be an Austrian, but I feel more Austrian than American." I had to work hard to fit into Austrian culture. I had to learn a new language and had to make many cultural adjustments. Germans value order, cleanliness, conservation, and *ruhe* (quietness). Americans are different in each of these areas. I had finally broken through the cultural boundaries and learned to fit into Austrian culture. I had learned to love Austrian culture and preferred many of the values that I knew

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<sup>106</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 62.

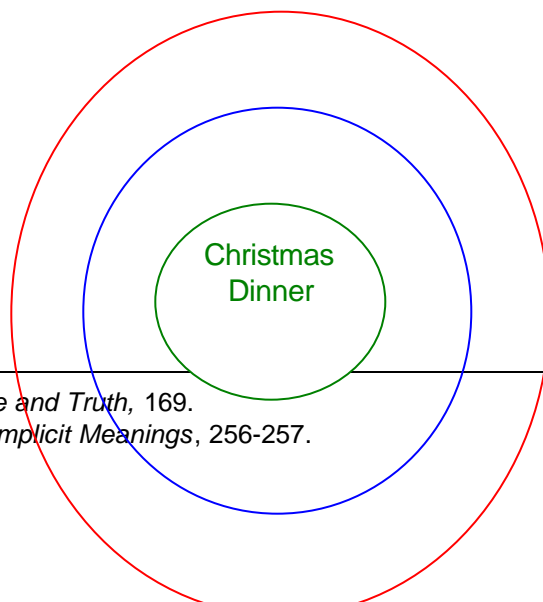


would be difficult to maintain in the United States. I was happy and comfortable. I didn't want to have to go through the readjustment to American culture.

Persons who are immersed in a culture other than their own find they feel what I felt as I wrote my diary entry. They are caught between two worlds. Cultures create boundaries that protect those on the inside from the outside. When a person enters a new culture they must learn to break through those boundaries. There are also inside boundaries that govern social interaction within the culture. As a Baptist in Innsbruck I was a member of a group considered to be a sect. My status was not the same as it had been in the community where I had worked as a youth director of a local Baptist Church in Virginia.

The boundaries created by societies are powerful. Renato Rosaldo acknowledges the power of cultural boundaries: "Cultures and their 'positioned subjects' are laced with power; and power; in turn, is shaped by cultural forms. Like form and feeling, culture and power are inextricably intertwined."<sup>107</sup> This power creates landmines that, when tripped, can force leaders to abort their missions and cost soldiers their lives. I defined boundaries in "The Utilization of Boundaries to Understand the Cultural Interaction Using the Xhosa Tribe and Missionaries in South Africa During the Frontier Wars from 1798 to 1873. I incorporated that definition into this study.

Mary Douglas uses the simple analogy of a meal in the United States to explain boundaries: 1) the order of meals in the United States is breakfast in the morning, lunch at midday and dinner in the early evening. 2) it would be acceptable to invite some acquaintances to have a drink, but it would not be acceptable to invite them to share a meal in your home. Some people you might have over for dinner, but not Christmas dinner. 3) if you only served soup and dessert it would not be considered dinner on either occasion, because you have not followed the proper structure. 4) Christmas dinner is more important than the dinner meal you serve on an ordinary day, thus you would be more selective about whom you invite to Christmas dinner.<sup>108</sup> The more you value something, like Christmas dinner, the more selective you are about whom you allow to penetrate that boundary. This means that the outer boundaries are weak while the inner boundaries are strong.<sup>109</sup> A boundary diagram of dinner in the United States would look something like this diagram in figure 1.



<sup>107</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 169.

<sup>108</sup> Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 256-257.

Dinner

Drinks

Figure 1

## 1. Maintaining Internal Boundaries

Social order is the classification of a symbolic system that holds things in place.<sup>110</sup> Internal boundaries are the social structures that maintain social order. Any given classification system, such as the use of boundaries, is a product of social relations.<sup>111</sup> Disorder is threatening. The drawing of symbolic boundaries is a way of bringing order out of chaos.<sup>112</sup> Boundaries are created within the context of social structure and through management of social structure over time. The dominant factor that determines cultural behavior is social structure.<sup>113</sup> The brain is the organizer but the blueprints for social response come from the culture itself.<sup>114</sup> The freedom to relax is socially controlled.<sup>115</sup> Some cultures have a very relaxed atmosphere while others are very rigid. When I lived in German culture punctuality was highly valued with little room for flexibility. More than once I watched the hands on the large clock outside the Munich Train station

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<sup>109</sup> Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*., 272.

<sup>110</sup> Douglas *Natural Symbols*, 81.

<sup>111</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 82.

<sup>112</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 73.

<sup>113</sup> Maurice Bloch, , *Ritual, history, and power : selected papers in anthropology* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone Press, 1989),1-18.

<sup>114</sup> George Herbert Mead, "Relation of Mind to Response and Environment," 112.

move to the arrival time as the train came to a stop. In German culture even relaxation has designated time. Every weekday from 12:00 until 2:00 you will relax. Businesses and Schools are closed.

When I attended a chaplain's conference sponsored by the Austrian Chaplain Corps, the daytime lectures were extremely formal. Class A uniform was the required dress code. Even discussion times were conducted in a very formal manner. In the evenings we met in the pub. In this prescribed time of relaxation in the informal setting, where the information presented during the day was more openly discussed. Just across the Austrian border the atmosphere in Italian culture is much more relaxed. You expect the train to be late. Once when I was riding a train in Italy the conductor stopped the train at a friend's home near the train tracks and had coffee on the veranda before continuing the journey to Rome. Many stores in Italy don't open until 10:00 A.M. and after a standard three-hour lunch break the owner may or may not return in the afternoon. Soldiers need to learn to be patient and flexible when interacting with cultures whose boundaries are maintained differently from what they are accustomed to.

#### **a. Social Pressure and Acceptance**

Every individual has complete control over his/her personal environment,  
<sup>116</sup> however there is often tremendous expectation to conform to the cultural

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<sup>115</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 107.

<sup>116</sup> Mead, "Relation of Mind to Response and Environment," 101.

standards of a particular society. The phenomenon that occurs when individuals feel that they have no option except conformity to cultural expectation is known as social pressure.<sup>117</sup> Self worth is often evaluated in relation to acceptance by others. By taking on the attitude of others in a society the individual is able to enter into their experiences and may judge himself in relation to standards prescribed by the community.<sup>118</sup>

George Herbert Mead believes that “The human self arises through its ability to take the attitude of the group to which he belongs.”<sup>119</sup> To belong is a blessing; not to belong is a curse. Social control occurs when a person takes the same attitude about himself that the community takes toward him.<sup>120</sup> This makes it difficult, if not impossible, for someone who is perceived negatively in the eyes of the community to receive the blessing of belonging; therefore, they feel cursed. The curse of not belonging appears to be the primary motive behind Andy Williams’s decision to go on a shooting spree on March 5, 2001 at Santana High School in suburban San Diego. When he moved to California he had trouble fitting in. “He was small and couldn’t defend himself, so the punks would pick on him,” said the neighbor, who identified himself only as Phil.<sup>121</sup> In an interview with Katie Couric on the *Today Show*, William’s girlfriend said that he

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<sup>117</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 81.

<sup>118</sup> Mead, “Relation of Mind to Response and Environment,” 103

<sup>119</sup> George Herbert Mead, “The Problem of Society: How We Become Selves,” in *Language, Culture and Society*, ed Ben G. Blount (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc. 1874), 103.

<sup>120</sup> Mead, “The Problem of Society: How We Become Selves,” 104

<sup>121</sup> Michael A. Fletcher and Sharon Waxman, “Boasts to friends went unbelieved” *The Washington Post*. MSNBC.com March 7, 2001

was teased because of the way he talked and the clothes that he wore.<sup>122</sup> This desire for acceptance was expressed in an interview with Williams friend Jacob Kaforey. Kaforey indicated that Williams seemed to enjoy the attention that his bragging brought to him: “He would just say anything that he thought would be cool.”<sup>123</sup> Most persons seek the blessing of social acceptance; rejection is a curse that can have tragic consequences. Soldiers need to be aware of this social pressure. It will be very difficult to carry out a mission that does not have the support of the group and especially the group leaders. Social pressure can be used to ones advantage if soldiers can gain group approval in such a way that peer pressure is used to reinforce the actions soldiers want to accomplish.

Some members of society discover they are born to lose. This is especially true in a success-centered society.<sup>124</sup> A person who is low in the social structure may present an avenue of approach if they think by cooperating their social structure will be enhanced. The disenfranchised respond positively to those who are genuinely concerned about their welfare. This was an important factor in the growth of Christianity. The Christian message appealed to the disenfranchised. “Throughout his ministry Jesus blessed the unlikely: poor fisherman, prostitutes, lepers, and tax collectors.”<sup>125</sup> Christianity won out over Mithraism one of its early competitors because the latter lost its attractiveness

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<sup>122</sup> *Today Show*, March 7, 2001

<sup>123</sup> Fletcher, “Boasts to friends went unbelieved”

<sup>124</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 164.

<sup>125</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 64.

among the disinherited while Christianity remained open to all.<sup>126</sup> If one group is cursing and the other is blessing then people will migrate toward the one doing the blessing. Persons who feel disenfranchised or believe that their needs are not being met may be avenues of approach for defection for gaining inside information concerning a culture, if they feel, that as a result, their status will be improved. The natural need for social acceptance is a factor which can help soldiers understand behavior which may seem bizarre unless one is aware of the social expectations in a particular culture. This will be evident later in this study in a discussion on ritual of sati. Soldiers need to identify the mechanisms of social conformity in the culture where they are working?

Religious leaders are aware that social pressure can influence individuals to participate in activities that are in violation of their religious convictions. Many religions warn against making approval of others the motive for one's actions. One way of resisting social conformity is not to covet its rewards.<sup>127</sup> This goal is found in the teaching of many religions as a means for those practicing the religion to remain faithful when their religious belief is challenged by the culture in which they live. "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2 .<sup>128</sup> "The men of the Thicket (the world) cried lies to the Envoys when Shuaib said to them. ' Will you not be God fearing? I am your faithful messenger so fear you

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<sup>126</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 134.

<sup>127</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 85.

God and obey you me.’ ” <sup>129</sup> Koran XXVI: 5-8 “Stand fast in Yoga, surrendering attachment; in success and failure be the same and then get busy with your works.” The Bhagavad-Gita II: 48. <sup>130</sup> This means that when you examine another culture you need to look for religious structures that may be in conflict with the existing social structures.

During the occupation of East Timor the Roman Catholic Church gained the full confidence of the Timorese people. The Indonesian army aware of this influence attempted to use it to their advantage. An intelligence briefing for the Indonesian government stated that “Ideas that are conveyed through church channels, if these tally with their own policies, reach the community fast and are obeyed. <sup>131</sup> Soldiers need to find out what the religion of a culture teaches about cultural conformity, and how much influence religion has in how people respond in the culture they are interacting with?

#### **b. Peer Pressure.**

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<sup>128</sup> Romans 12.2 NIV (New International Version)

<sup>129</sup> XXVI. 5-8 Koran trans. A.J. Arberry.

<sup>130</sup> *The Bhagavad-Gita*, ed. R.C. Zaehner, trans. J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), II:48.

<sup>131</sup> Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *The War Against East Timor* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1984), 194



There are many methods of enforcing cultural expectations. One of the most effective is peer pressure. This influence is strong in the American teen culture where dress code is often strictly enforced by ones peers. Failure to conform to the groups expectation will likely result in severe ridicule and rejection. Every culture determines and reveals the cost and rewards of group allegiance and social conformity.<sup>132</sup> Soldiers need to predetermine how their mission will influence the cost and rewards of the group.

Another example of the relationship between social control and peer pressure is evident in this statement by Okonkwo an African male and protagonist in the book, *Things Fall Apart*: “No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his woman folk and children (and especially his women folk) he was not really a man. “<sup>133</sup> The social pressure to be perceived as strong and masculine for Okonkwo was intense. On another occasion, Okonkwo killed his adopted son, whom he deeply loved, because the death had been ordered by the village chief and Okonkwo was afraid of being thought of as weak by his peers.<sup>134</sup> This is an indication of the powerful influence of social pressure to conform to cultural standards. The dilemma of choosing between personal values of right and wrong and the dictates of social pressure can have devastating personal consequences. Take as an example of the teenager caught in an environment where his peers are pressuring him or her to experiment with drugs. Soldiers crossing internal boundaries need to be aware

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<sup>132</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 15.

<sup>133</sup> Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 53.

that if their mission encounters resistance to peer pressure the likelihood of success is minimal. It is an advantage to have peer pressure on your side.

### **c. Institutions**

Another source of pressure to conform to cultural norms is exerted by established institutions within a culture. A society or group with high grid organization may use their institutions to exhort power over its members.<sup>135</sup> Institutionalized power makes a leader less vulnerable from attackers or rivals.<sup>136</sup> The army is a good example. A commander's orders are to be obeyed. The institution supports the commander's authority and prescribes serious punishment for those who fail to obey. Soldiers obey the commander. Whether or not a soldier personally likes the commander or agrees with his decision on how to fight the battle is irrelevant. Before a staff ride of the Gettysburg battlefield, all the officers in my engineer battalion were required to read the book *Killer Angels*. In the book Michael Shaara describes James Longstreet's reluctance to carry out General Lee's order to go on the offensive. Shaara writes in a manner that attempts to glamorize Longstreet, in retrospect, for being correct. Shaara's intent was not successful with our officers. With their awareness of the importance of obedience, they suggested that Longstreet should have been relieved of command for insubordination. Their feeling was

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<sup>134</sup> Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 61.

<sup>135</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 179.

<sup>136</sup> Maurice Bloch, *Prey Into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 80.

that Longstreet's reluctance to conform to the expectations of military culture (whole hearted obedience) was more detrimental to the outcome of Gettysburg than Lee's tactics. They were appalled by his failure to conform to the instructional expectations of the military.

In military missions, the more institutional support the more likely the success of the mission. In a democracy Presidents or Prime Ministers must ask governing bodies to declare war. This gives the war institutional support. This is why president George Bush carefully constructed a multi national alliance prior to Dessert Storm. The United States had the capacity to fight Iraq without the militaries of other nations being involved, but Bush wanted the institutional support of other nations. Soliciting the support of surrounding cultures is an important avenue of approach. The absence of their support can be a mine/mind field.

#### **d. Leadership.**

One of the most important factors in maintaining internal boundaries and social control is leadership. The awe associated with leaders is a powerful cultural force. The blessing or endorsement of a leader can breach an important avenue of approach. Cursing a leader can trigger an equally large land mine/mind. The significance of the chief's status and how that can impact mission is illustrated in an event that occurred in South Africa on December 10,

1834. A Xhosa Chief, Xhoxho, was wounded while trying to keep some Boers from taking another chief's cattle. Wounding a chief in Xhosa culture is unthinkable. It is the equivalent of cursing God. Xhoxho was not seriously hurt, but for the Xhosa the fact that he had been shot and wounded had profound significance. They perceived the wound as an intention to kill all chiefs. John Milton in *The Edges of War* records the perlocutionary effect of this curse, "Every Caffre who saw Xhoxho's wound went back to the hut, took his assegay (quiver of spears) and shield, and set out to fight, and said, 'It is better that we die than to be treated thus ... Life is no use to us if they shoot our chiefs.' " <sup>137</sup> Maqpmma another chief, dismissed the tearful pleas of missionary F. G. Kayser to stop preparation for war saying, "The fire is burning and I cannot quench it." That same day the irreversible battle cry "the land was dead" went out. War had begun. <sup>138</sup>

Leadership is essential to social order. The St. Bartholomew Massacre of French Huguenots in Paris on August 24, 1572 occurred as a result of regal sanction. Catherine de Medici authorized the murder of the Chief of the Huguenot party, Admiral Coligny, and her son King Charles IX is reported to have said "Kill them all." <sup>139</sup> A leader embodies order. When those in authority sanction violence they create the potential for chaos to erupt. Barrington Moore

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<sup>137</sup> John Milton, *The Edges of War: A History of Frontier Wars (1702-1878)* (Cape Town: Juta & Co, Ltd, 1983), 101.

<sup>138</sup> Milton, *The Edges of War*, 102.

<sup>138</sup> Moore, Barrington Jr. *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 102.

<sup>139</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History* 49-50.

describes the aftermath on this fateful day. "With killing made legitimate, the killers broadened their targets. ...Those against whom someone bore a grudge or who were a barrier to an inheritance were speedily dubbed Huguenots." When crime becomes sanctioned or righteous chaos erupts. This occurred in the Los Angeles Riot in 1992. In the mind of the rioters the system was not just or righteous; therefore justice and righteousness of their actions didn't matter. Once people saw that there was no social control chaos erupted. I was in the California National Guard at the time. Our Battalion was on stand by outside of Oakland because riots were expected to break out in that city. Most people are unaware of how close the state of California came to total chaos. Leadership is an essential element of social control.

#### **e. Divine Sanction**

In some cultures a leader such as a king is given divine status. In these cultures the role of the king is to give order to the world like the seasons, the sun and the moon.<sup>140</sup> This concept is expressed in the poetry of the Indians in the American North Pacific coast. The chief is called the "support of the sky." This is a speech act of blessing that gives authority to the perceived status of the chief.<sup>141</sup> The same concept is visually portrayed in the throne room of Norschwanstein Castle in Bavaria. Jesus Christ is painted on the ceiling. Underneath Christ are the twelve apostles and just below the disciples is the

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<sup>140</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 41.

<sup>141</sup> Boas, "Introduction to the Handbook of American Indian Languages," 30.

king's throne. In some cultures this same status may be given to a religious prophet..<sup>142</sup> In a democracy the leader is elected, however this does not invalidate the importance of divine blessing. As I observed the presidential debates between Al Gore and George W. Bush I noticed that both candidates ended the debate with "God bless America." In the debates themselves the bottom line for each candidate seemed to be the same. You will receive a greater blessing (your life will be better) if I'm elected. Where the leader is given divine status he has the authority to exert a great amount of control over even very personal decisions such as who you are allowed to marry.<sup>143</sup> The quality of life when others have this kind of control over ones behavior varies according to the restraints and freedoms that are prescribed.<sup>144</sup>

When a leader does not have divine sanction as the basis of authority then his basis of authority rests on the perceived authority of the society. There are several ways to enhance authority. One is for the authority figure to project an image of being greater than his predecessor. This is especially important when a leader is new<sup>145</sup> Often at a military change of command ceremony the new commander after praising the accomplishments of his predecessor will make reference to what is yet to be accomplished that can be accomplished. This technique was used by President George W. Bush in his first address to congress where he made reference to the great leaders of the United States in the past but

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<sup>142</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 28-32.

<sup>143</sup> Scheub, *The World and the Word*, 272.

<sup>144</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 15.

<sup>145</sup> Bloch, *Prey Into Hunter*, 82-85.

expressed that there was still work to be done: “And when we walk through Statuary Hall and see those men and women of marble, we're reminded of their courage and achievement. Yet America's purpose is never found only in statues or history. America's purpose always stands before us. Our generation must show courage in a time of blessing, as our nation has always shown in times of crisis.”<sup>146</sup> Bush also ends his speech with a quote from the Bible: “Together we can share in the credit of making our country more prosperous and generous and just, and earn from our conscience and from our fellow citizens the highest possible praise: Well done, good and faithful servants.”<sup>147</sup> This is certainly a desire to show divine sanction.

The significance of divine sanction is found in an incident involving a friend of Muhammad and the prophet, concerning six men from the Khazrai culture in Mecca. They were trying to decide if they wanted to accept Muhammad as their leader: “If God unites them in it,” stated Mohammed’s friend, “no one will be more powerful than you.”<sup>148</sup> This political alliance needed the universal appeal of a divine blessing to make it firm.

Divine sanction is important in many other aspects of culture. Religion is often used as a means of appealing to universal values. Having a divine blessing is often a critical element of influence. An essential requirement in the ordination

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<sup>146</sup> George W. Bush, “Address of the President to the Joint Session of Congress” February 27, 2001 The White House Office of the Press Secretary, [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) March 5, 2001

<sup>147</sup> Bush, “Address of the President to the Joint Session of Congress”

of any minister from my faith heritage, Southern Baptist, is a sense of divine calling which gives divine sanction to the calling. This need is deeply engrained in military culture. An essential part of every change of command, reflagging or any other official military ceremony is a prayer by the Chaplain. Even if the commander is an atheist it is unlikely he would omit this cherished value of divine blessing. If your mission has divine sanction in the eyes of the culture with which you interact you have opened a wide avenue of approach. If your mission is against God or the gods, you have created a volatile mine/mind field.

#### **f. Family and Community Honor.**

The use of family name or the negative impact of dishonoring one's immediate family name can be a very effective means of social control. This is evident in Roy Mottahedeh's historical novel, *The Mantel of the Prophet*. In this story about a Muslim boy Ali, growing up in Iran, his mother uses family honor in an attempt to help him overcome his fear of leaving home: "She kissed him and told him that he should be brave like his father and like his namesake and ancestor, Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet." <sup>149</sup>

The pressure of upholding the family name and community honor is extremely strong in German culture. One night, in the youth center where I

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<sup>148</sup> Michael Cook, *Muhammad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 19.

<sup>149</sup> Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 39.



worked in Austria, all the kids were in a remorseful mood. Instead of playing ping pong or fussball they just sat around and talked. I discovered that one of their friends had been arrested that day for embezzlement. The main emphasis of the discussion that evening was how his actions had marred the honor of his family and how difficult this would be for them. Growing up as a preacher's kid in the Sedalia Valley I was well aware of the impact my actions would have on my family, especially on my father. My love for my father and the fear of hurting him, was a strong form of control for me. A means of creating an avenue of approach is to appeal to family honor. Causing some one to disgrace her/his family creates a mine/mind field that not only cures them but their family as well.

One reason the Vietnam war was so difficult to process for soldiers is that when they returned home they did not receive honor from their nation or their communities. After other American wars, soldiers were welcomed home with parades, and hometown citizens praised their actions. This blessing helped in healing and was justification for some of the ugly aspects of war. One of my parishioners told me one day how young lieutenants fresh from ROTC or one of the Military Academies had a reputation for getting their units killed. If a unit suspected that their lieutenant was dangerous to the safety of the unit they would draw straws to see who would frag the young officer. Imagine the guilt created when contemplating this action after the war was over. When soldiers returned from Vietnam there was no blessing, and in some instances they were cursed

and even spit on instead. This made it much more difficult to process some of their actions.

In another incident I counseled with the mother whose son became mentally handicapped after being exposed to Agent Orange. When a child is killed or wounded parents want to believe this sacrifice was for a worthy cause. The absence of the community's blessing impacts the parents and loved ones of the victims of war as well as soldiers. Knowing what actions are sanctioned by family and community honor is important in understanding internal boundaries

#### **g. Personal Values**

In the military the appeal to patriotism is a very effective means of using a personal value to motivate soldiers. When I was in the National Guard we always launched one major offensive during our two weeks of annual training. After the pre battle briefing we would play the opening of the Movie *Patton* where George C. Scott, with a large American Flag as a backdrop, reminds his soldiers of the cherished American value of loyalty and giving your all as an American to win in war.

It was the personal value of loyalty that was Robert E. Lee's motivation for turning down the invitation to command the United States Army. When Virginia seceded his loyalty would not allow him to fight against his homeland. This fact

was embedded in the psyche of every student of Virginia history when I was in school. There are certain cultures that foster personal pride and patriotism more than others. Virginia is one of those places. After an experience in which my pride and prestige had been severely hurt, I was talking about the incident to a prominent Virginia professor visiting Golden Gate Seminary where I was a student. He said, "You know being a Virginian makes dealing with this much harder." I immediately understood what he was talking about. There is a phrase that appears on cocktail napkins in Virginia: "To be a Virginian even on one's mother's side is a venerable blessing from God almighty." For most people this is a joke, not for Virginians. This type of sectarian sentiment has diminished in American culture but in many cultures it is still important and carries immense control over human behavior.

#### **h. Fear**

Social control is not always voluntary. One of the methods used to maintain involuntary social control is fear. Politicians may gain power by exploiting the fears of the majority against a minority. This is what happened in Bosnia in 1992. In his book *Bosnia – A Short History*, Noel Malcolm describes the method used to create this hostility between neighbors who had coexisted peaceably for forty years.

"The psychology of terror which the paramilitary commanders introduced into these places was not just a matter of frightening

the local Muslims into flight- though in this they were successful, and it was estimated that 95 per cent of the Muslims of Zvornik, Visegrad and Foca had fled their homes by the end of April (1992) An equally important part of the psychological operation was to convince the local Serbs that they had to 'defend' themselves against their Muslim neighbors. The ground had been prepared, of course, by the broadcast of Radio Television Belgrade, warning Serbs of Ustasa programs and fundamentalist jihads. And having seen genuine news footage of dead bodies and burning villages in Croatia over the previous nine months, ordinary Serb peasants and townsmen were easily persuaded that these threats were real.<sup>150</sup>

Xenophobia has been used throughout world history. Two other examples from the twentieth century are Hitler's persecution of the Jews and racial injustice against African-Americans in the United States by groups like the Klu Klux Klan.

Social control can also be maintained using the fear of the unknown. Mary Douglas has observed that, "each family and social environment has a way to justify cohesion and human suffering is explained in a way that reinforces the control."<sup>151</sup> This control is directly related to the concept of blessing and cursing. In Xhosa culture women are made to follow the tribal customs through the fear that otherwise they will be cursed by giving birth to unhealthy children. They in turn will be blessed with healthy children if they conform to tribal customs.<sup>152</sup> The use of fear is often tied to religion and the fear of not being blessed. In the Old Testament God's people must keep His covenant and observe his precepts to receive the blessing of fertility and livestock.<sup>153</sup> The curse of Satan and evil

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<sup>150</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia-A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 237.

<sup>151</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 136.

<sup>152</sup> Scheub, *The World and the Word*, 283.

<sup>153</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 50.

are also used as a means of social control. In many bathhouses in Iran a devil is painted on the ceiling of the bathhouse to remind men of Hell which is steamy like a bathhouse.<sup>154</sup> An interesting use of fear occurs in New Guinea due to a weak social structure. With no other social controls in place physical size makes one superior. Big Men are able to dominate or elevate themselves within the social structures on the basis of physical size alone.<sup>155</sup> Knowing the fears of a culture which you enter is important PIRs in seeking to avoid land mines/minds. An awareness of fears can be used to your advantage

### **i. Prejudice**

The goal of prejudice is to make the majority superior by making the minority inferior. The fear of losing status is a source of prejudice. The worst prejudice I have ever been exposed to was while working at a Community Center in a poor white neighborhood in Richmond, Virginia. At first it seemed ironic that the teens with whom I worked would be so venomous against African-Americans in their community whose living conditions were extremely similar to their own. Then I realized that putting down African-Americans was their only means of superior social status. If being white did not make them better, then they had no status above anyone. Moore explains that outcast find his or her own outcast to

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<sup>154</sup> Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 30.

<sup>155</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 90.

whom they feel superior. “In this way society based on inequality could gain stability by making it possible for everybody to feel superior to somebody.” <sup>156</sup>

I was made aware of minority status of African-Americans while sharing a dorm room with an African American in seminary. We became close friends. One night while we were studying my roommate remarked, “Charlie, just wait till we take over the world, things are going to be different.” This was followed by a nervous, “Whoops! I forgot you’re not black.” As I reflected on his statement it was a potent indication of the frustration of always having a lower status due to race. I also realized that I had been spoken to as an insider in a culture accustomed to a minority status. I imagine that my roommate’s comment is often made when no whites are present. Knowing what groups within a culture are the victims of prejudice, helps in understanding the internal boundaries of the culture.

#### **k. Formal Speech**

On my first day in the military, my brigade chaplain took me to meet my battalion commander. When we left his office, my chaplain supervisor pulled me aside and called to my attention that not once had I addressed my commander as “Sir.” This was the last time to my knowledge that I had a conversation with a higher-ranking officer when I did not use the term “Sir” or “Mam” as frequently as possible. In structured environments such as the military, formal language

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<sup>156</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 105.

maintains and enforces social control.<sup>157</sup> Another example is in the Sedalia Valley where I grew up we always addressed adults as “Mr.” and “Mrs.” and answered, “yes, Sir” and “yes, Mam.” My father, the local minister, was usually addressed by others as “Reverend Reynolds.” Language is a key indicator of social position. In Japan the status of the person to whom you are apologizing determines the register of language you use.<sup>158</sup>

Language can be used to curse one of lower status. *In The Mantle of the Prophet*, When a tailors apprentice drops a tray of tea, the tailor shouts, “Fatherless, godless child, dirt be on your head.... “<sup>159</sup> Status is evident in the fact that the apprentice would not dare use the same language in speaking to the tailor. One speaks of the death of a person of high status differently than they do a person of low status.<sup>160</sup> The death of U.S. President John Kennedy is almost always referred to with a tone of reverence, while the death of Timothy McVey might be spoken of with contempt or a casual tone. When interacting with persons of status the use of proper language is essential. To fail to do so is a curse. What my brigade chaplain made clear to me that day was that by not using the term “Sir,” I had cursed my new commander. Because my commander knew I was new to the Army, I avoided a land mine/mind but had this not been the case, our relationship would have had a rocky beginning. The use of formal

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<sup>157</sup> Bloch, *Prey Into Hunter*, 29.

<sup>158</sup> Naoko Maeshiba , Naoko Yoshinaga, Gabriele Kasper and Steven Ross, “Transfer and proficiency in interlanguage apolgizing” in *Speech Acts Across Cultures: Challenges to Communication in a Second Language*, ed. Susan M. Gass and Joyce Neu (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996), 159.

<sup>159</sup> Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 34.

<sup>160</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 2.

speech with religious leaders and others in authority is not only common courtesy but can be avenue of approach. Failure to do so is a certain mind/mine field.

### **m. Wealth.**

Economics is one of the most important factors impacting social structure.<sup>161</sup> We often refer to being financially rich as being blessed. In the excerpt of George W. Bush's first address to congress found earlier in this paper he referred to our current budget excess as a time of blessing. "Another picture would be full of blessings: a balanced budget, big surpluses, ...Our generation must show courage in a time of blessing, as our nation has always shown in times of crisis."<sup>162</sup> In most cultures wealth enhances social structure. In most cultures those with wealth hold a high social status and often use their wealth to influence internal boundaries.

### **n. Witchcraft**

Witchcraft is not viewed by most Americans as an important contributor to internal social order, at least in this century, but in some cultures it plays a prominent role. An example of this is found in the Xhosa culture of South Africa in the nineteenth century. The Xhosa attributed any unfortunate event that occurred in the community to witchcraft. Xhosa life was surrounded by a thicket

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<sup>161</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 131.

<sup>162</sup> Bush, George W. "Address of the President to the Joint Session of Congress".



of taboos and any deviant behavior made one suspect of witchcraft.<sup>163</sup> When catastrophe befell the community it was the responsibility of a diviner to identify among the group a witch who was causing this misfortune. The identified witch was tortured by being staked to an anthill or stoned with hot rocks. Attributing evil to human beings can divide humans into powerful judges at the expense of the powerless who are judged.<sup>164</sup> Witch-hunts serve other functions as well. One can gain political advantage over an opponent through the accusation of witchcraft. In the Mukanza Village in Northern Rhodesia, disputes over the succession of leadership “are often in the oblique idiom of witchcraft and sorcery.”<sup>165</sup> In Xhosa society the wealthy may be identified as witches. After they are killed their property is given to the village chief.<sup>166</sup>

#### **o. Ancestors**

“The Greek philosopher Euhemeros who lived in Macedonia between 320-260 B.C. said that the gods were departed chiefs and warriors, who had been venerated before their death and deified afterwards. From this he deduced that all the Gods came from human ancestors.”<sup>167</sup> The primary function of ancestors is to impose traditional social order. John G. Gager reminds us “the social world

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<sup>163</sup> Janet Hodgson, “A Battle for Sacred Power: Christian Beginnings among the Xhosa” in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social & Cultural History* ed. Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), 35.

<sup>164</sup> David Parkin, “Introduction” in *The Anthropology of Evil* ed. David Parkin (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 11.

<sup>165</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 140.

<sup>166</sup> Brian R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest Among Tribal and Third World Peoples* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) 238.

<sup>167</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 31.

in which we live determines our experience of what is real.”<sup>168</sup> In Xhosa tribal religion for example, there is no distinction between the natural and the supernatural.<sup>169</sup> In these cultures ancestor spirits are a part of everyday life.

### **i. Ancestors Role in Social Control.**

It is important when interacting with other cultures to understand the function ancestors may serve. The most obvious is social control. It is through obedience to ancestors that social order is maintained.<sup>170</sup> Many rulers claim divine authority through ancestors. A Swazi king is regarded as semi-divine when he is living, and becomes a deity when he dies and enters the realm of his ancestors.<sup>171</sup> It is widely accepted that ancestor worship supports the judicial role of living elders.<sup>172</sup> The power of ancestors in social control is evident in Achebe's book, *When Things Fall Apart*. Whenever the spirit addresses a person, that person touches the earth as a symbol of submission.<sup>173</sup> Mary Douglas gives an example of the revelation from an ancestor resulting in the expulsion of an unwanted member from the community.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 9.

<sup>169</sup> Hodgson, "A Battle for Sacred Power, 69.

<sup>170</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, p 59.

<sup>171</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 76.

<sup>172</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), 9.

<sup>173</sup> Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 88-93.

<sup>174</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 137-138.

The power of ancestors is enhanced by association with the divine. In some cultures ancestors are a medium for access to the gods <sup>175</sup> This elevated status of ancestors is embodied in a Buddhist ritual performed in Japan. The ancestor's tablet, a memorial marker representing or containing her/his spirit, is placed on the steps of the temple. Over time the tablet is moved so that symbolically it ascends step by step until it enters the Temple where it stays for a period of time. Then, during the festival of Bon, the tablet is lured through the use of food to a stream where the spirit of the ancestor is swept away and returns to the gods. <sup>176</sup> Often special knowledge is acquired from ancestors through dreams and mediums. <sup>177</sup> In some African cultures the spirits of the ancestors speak directly through the people. Some African religions interpose a hero god between a supreme God and the ancestors. <sup>178</sup> In Sierra Leone, prayer is offered through a succession of ancestors. <sup>179</sup> From this association with gods, ancestors are believed to have acquired additional power to bless or to curse the lives of their descendents. <sup>180</sup>

Those who worship ancestors are aware that there are forces behind storms, rain, rivers, seas, lakes, wells, etc. It is believed that ancestors influence these forces. <sup>181</sup> The primary concern in relation to ancestors is to ensure an

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<sup>175</sup> Hodgson, "A Battle for Sacred Power", 69.

<sup>176</sup> Bloch, *Ritual, history, and power*, 54.

<sup>177</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 61.

<sup>178</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 43.

<sup>179</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 57.

<sup>180</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 24.

<sup>181</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 22-23.

abundant harvest.<sup>182</sup> It is the ancestors who fertilize the land and make the crops grow.<sup>183</sup> This dependence is expressed in the cultivation ritual of the Bantu in Rhodesia. The ritual is conducted at the beginning of the yearly cultivation of the crop. Cooked yams and a fowl are offered to the ancestors. Perrander gives this description found in I. Schapera's book *The Bantu-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*: "As the blood of the fowl drips on the earth and the yam he says, 'Grandfather So-and-so, you once came and hoed here and then you left it to me. You also Earth, Ya, on whose soil I am going to cultivate; when I work, let a fruitful year come upon me, do not let a knife cut me, do not let a tree break and fall upon me, do not let a snake bite me.'" <sup>184</sup>

The influence of ancestors goes beyond agriculture. Ancestors influence every aspect of a family's life including health and fertility.<sup>185</sup> Ancestors also help their descendents in time of war,<sup>186</sup> Any evil or anything that can't be explained including drought, thunder and lightning, earthquakes, famine, sickness, barrenness, death, and diseases such as epilepsy, may be attributed to the influence of ancestors <sup>187</sup> This lack of understanding may be openly expressed in this conversation with an ancestor, "Why did you send illness on this child? Why do you turn your back on us? Here is your beast, take it and look after us for we are looking after you." <sup>188</sup> Some societies feel complete dependence on the

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<sup>182</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 74.

<sup>183</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 60-61.

<sup>184</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 83.

<sup>185</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 59.

<sup>186</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 61.

<sup>187</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 60.

<sup>188</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 63.

ancestral spirits for these critical survival needs.<sup>189</sup> For African men and women from backland villages, life has no meaning apart from ancestor spirits.<sup>190</sup> It appears that all of the outcomes of all the unknowns of life over which people themselves have no control are attributed to the influence of ancestors.

Ancestors are always present to harm as well as help. The Tallensi of the Gold Coast believe they are engaged in a never-ending struggle with their ancestors.

<sup>191</sup> Africans often asked Christian missionaries if they became Christian, who would protect them from the anger of their ancestors.<sup>192</sup> Rosaldo relates the story of a Kadidugen man who was dying. He stated that he had no bad feelings about anyone. He was letting his neighbors know that his spirit would not return to afflict the living.<sup>193</sup> This example illustrates the connection between ancestors and inside social control. If you mistreat someone, they can seek vindication as a departed ancestor. In such cultures ancestors not only live eternally, they are always watchful.<sup>194</sup> This understanding is evident in a statement made by a Xhosa girl talking about her parents: "My father and mother died; they are now spirits and I know they see me every day. ... they can be here whenever they want to be because they are spirits."<sup>195</sup>

It is the sudden attacks, not their benevolence that is the motivation for worshipping ancestors. They are given produce from the harvest. The offering of

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<sup>189</sup> B.A. Pauw, *Christianity and Xhosa Tradition: Belief and Ritual Among Xhosa-speaking Christians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1775), 12.

<sup>190</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 57.

<sup>191</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 59.

<sup>192</sup> Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 146.

<sup>193</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*, 123.

<sup>194</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*. 24.

beer is so common that it is designated as the food of the ancestors.<sup>196</sup> Cattle held in such reverence by the Xhosa, are sacrificed to the ancestors to ensure the community's protection.<sup>197</sup> Ancestors live in the spirit world but their presence can be invoked in the tribal cemetery making it a dreadful place. It is here that offerings are brought.<sup>198</sup> Ancestors were also credited and thanked for things like the successful birth of a child, a good harvest and a good hunt.<sup>199</sup> A custom of the Ashanti in Africa is to take the newborn child to the grave of an ancestor.<sup>200</sup> At a wedding, wine and other gifts are offered to the ancestral spirits. The bride may accompany the groom to the grave of his ancestors.<sup>201</sup>

These are just some of the many ways in which Internal boundaries are maintained within a culture. Just from these examples soldiers can understand the immensity of the task of seeking to understand the forces that maintain Internal boundaries. One of the ways to simplify this task is by drawing a boundary diagram. Later in this study I will show an application of boundaries with Muslims living in America. I have included boundary diagrams for this study the appendix.

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<sup>195</sup> Pauw, *Christianity and Xhosa Tradition*, 136.

<sup>196</sup> Janet Hodgson, *Princess Emma* (South Africa: Craighall Donker, 1987),34-35.

<sup>197</sup> Milton, *The Edges of War*,13.

<sup>198</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 89.

<sup>199</sup> Milton, *The Edges of War*,15.

<sup>200</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 93.

<sup>201</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 97.

## 2. Maintaining External Boundaries

In addition to inner boundaries, which maintain order, soldiers must cross outer boundaries which function to protect societies. Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger* states, "Its outside lines (cultural boundaries) contain power to reward conformity and repulse attack."<sup>202</sup> It is possible they will receive positive reception. American soldiers were very good to Austrian citizens during the American occupation following WWII. These soldiers created a lasting avenue of approach. As a result Americans were well liked. I usually received a positive reception there, at least until they found out I was a Baptist. Such was the positive reception received by British sailors in Tahiti as described in *Mutiny of the Bounty* written by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall: The Humblest A. B. in the forecastle might enter any house on shore, assured of a welcome." Some cultures such as the Cargo Cult actively seek the presence of outsiders. Having observed the benefits of exchange with people from the outside world, they find themselves denied the basic human rights of social intercourse with people they would like to interact with.<sup>203</sup> They feel excluded, disregarded and of no value. The Cargo Cult is willing to abolish all existing commitments and relationship for the sake of establishing a new, more profitable link.<sup>204</sup>

Most societies, however, are suspicious of outsiders. In the tightly structured Tallensi Culture anyone not bound by ties of kinship is perceived as an

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<sup>202</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 114.

<sup>203</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 166-167.

<sup>204</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 166-167.

enemy. The more tightly structured a group in their social relationship the more threatened they will be by an outsider.<sup>205</sup> A common method of protecting external cultural boundaries is to demonize things that lie outside of the boundary. Pollution of purity according to Moore usually falls into four categories: (a) idolatry and moral defilement, (b) sexual prohibitions, (c) dietary restrictions, (d) unclean objects or persons<sup>206</sup> Mary Douglas would add a fifth category (e) body fluids.

### **a. Idolatry**

One of the best examples of boundaries is found in the Bible. In the Old Testament, Israel formed her boundaries by placing their moral relationship with God on the inside and set boundaries of protection against the demon gods of their neighbors on the outside.<sup>207</sup> Israel's moral relationship with God was maintained through the communities obedience to the certain laws and regulations on the inside which distinguished them from the demons on the outside. This boundary is described in Leviticus 18:24 as a speech act of warning, "Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations ...before you became defiled."<sup>208</sup> This is followed by Leviticus 26:16 which threatens God's curse upon Israel if they step outside of the boundary; "If you reject my decrees and abhor my laws...I will bring upon you sudden terror,

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<sup>205</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 87.

<sup>206</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 3.

<sup>207</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 17.

<sup>208</sup> Leviticus 18:24 NIV, New International Version.



wasting diseases and fever, that will destroy your sight and drain away your life.”<sup>209</sup>

One need not go back to Biblical times to see the use of morality as a boundary against moral defilement. The fear of moral defilement was expressed by my Sunday School teacher, when I decided to attend seminary in San Francisco. He pulled me aside. “Why,” he said, “do you want to go out there with all those weirdoes and hippies?” His message was a warning which expressed his fear of moral contamination and safety. More than once he had told us that “if God did not destroy San Francisco he owed Sodom and Gomorrah an apology.” This inner “purity” used as a boundary of protection from the outside, is not unique to Israel or my Sunday School teacher. This is a universe where men often prosper by conforming to holiness and perish when they deviate from it.<sup>210</sup> Chaplains from some conservative denominations sometimes have difficulty finding churches when they leave the military because they have been tainted, in the eyes of some, by working in a pluralistic religious environment. Moral purity is only a small aspect of pollution rules, and contagion of a society.”<sup>211</sup> Anything outside of the accepted boundaries may be associated with evil.

The concept of moral defilement, according to political writer

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<sup>209</sup> Leviticus 26:16 NIV, New International Version.

<sup>210</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 50

<sup>211</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 129.

Christopher Caldwell, was a political issue in the 2000 Presidential campaign: "And, stunningly, voters who are worried about moral decline back Bush 68-18... It may be that "morality" is just a marketing slogan, a trademark, a brand -- a word that Republicans have succeeded in linking to themselves in the public mind. Words like 'caring' and 'peace' and 'compassion' have played the same role for Democrats for decades. It used to be that to ask a voter 'Are you compassionate?' was to ask 'Are you a Democrat?' Perhaps today asking 'Is 'morality' important to you?' is the same as asking 'Are you a Republican?'" <sup>212</sup> Any time soldiers are perceived as immoral then avenues of approach become much more difficult. The analysis of boundaries in this study will demonstrate how this has already occurred in how Americans are perceived by Muslims.

## **b. Sexual Prohibitions**

One of the primary functions of External boundaries is the protection against sexual contamination. The Aborigines in Australia castrate men they doubt will marry as a means of preventing sexual misconduct. The violation of sexual purity outside of marriage is potential land mine/mine of which soldiers need to be aware. When the American soldier raped and murdered a young Muslim girl in Kosovo there was cultural damage done in addition to the brutality of this crime. This will be covered extensively in the analysis of boundaries and in the section of this study on ritual.

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<sup>212</sup>Christopher Caldwell, "Your Morality My Values" *The Atlantic Online*, Politics and Prose, June 28, 2000, [www.theatlantic.com/unbound/polipro/pp2000-06-28htm](http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/polipro/pp2000-06-28htm). March 5, 2001.

An interesting twist on this protection found in Muslim culture is worth mentioning here. In Muslim culture there is also a boundary prohibiting Muslim women from marrying non-Muslim men. According to the Parents Manuel, It is not permissible for Muslim girls to have any interest in a boy who is non-Muslim even if there is no intention of marriage because this could lead to the possibility of marriage.<sup>213</sup> She, under no circumstances can be alone with a non-Muslim man. What is interesting is that Islam has made marriage to Jewish or Christian women lawful for Muslim men. Dr. Al-Qaradawi offers this explanation, “how can Islam take chances on the future of its daughters by giving them into the hands of people who neither honor their religion nor are concerned to protect their rights...” Islam guarantees freedom of belief and practice to the Christian or Jewish wife of a Muslim, safeguarding her rights according to her own faith. Other religions, such as Judaism and Christianity, do not ... It would be impossible for the Muslim woman to retain her respect for her beliefs as well as to practice her religion properly if she were opposed in this regard by the master of the house at every step.” I think an understanding of boundaries offers another explanation. The practice of my religion is superior to yours therefore I can cross your boundary lines but your religion is inferior so you can't cross mine. While using the pretence of ethics the motive is to make Christianity appear inferior to Islam.

### c. Dietary Restrictions

Many groups which practice dietary restrictions will say that they do so for health reasons. Mary Douglas does not believe that concern for health is the primary issue. She equates pork avoidance for Jews and Muslims as symbols of allegiance to their culture, the same concept as Friday abstinence for Irish Catholics<sup>214</sup> “The whole idea behind clean and unclean animals is conformity not for health reasons. Douglas believes that through diet, “conformity was given a physical expression at every meal.”<sup>215</sup> Conformity protects boundaries. The refusal of Jews and Christians to eat meat of any animal that has not been properly slaughtered is for a different reason. Blood is off limits because it is the life that belongs to God alone. Draining the blood transforms a living creature into a food item. In various cultures soldiers may run into various dietary restrictions. It may or may not be a landmine. Many Jews and Muslims are not bothered if others eat pork in their presence but others are offended. The importance of dietary restrictions in a particular culture is an area of ambiguity which needs to be clarified in order to avoid a landmine/mind.

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<sup>213</sup> *Parents Manuel: A Guide For Muslim Parents Living in North America* (Brentwood, MD: The Women’s Committee The Muslim Students Association of the United States & Canada, American Trust Publications, 1976), 83.

<sup>214</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 62.

#### **d. Unclean Objects or Persons**

Cultures maintain values by excluding as unclean anything that does not conform to the values they have adopted. Mary Douglas explains that “Uncleanness or dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained.”<sup>215</sup> Dirt offends order, so eliminating it helps cultures to organize their environment.<sup>217</sup> By personifying that which is outside of the boundaries, such as dirt or evil, cultures protect their boundaries and isolate themselves from evil.<sup>218</sup> This process of demonizing creates an ironic twist in the application of blessing. By cursing or dehumanizing what is outside, the inside is perceived as blessed.<sup>219</sup> The process of dehumanizing and demonizing the enemy is a common practice in war: Germans become krauts, Asians become geeks, Arabs become rag heads etc. It is interesting that in the bombing of Serbia where we did not see the enemy except from a distance this dehumanization [to my knowledge] did not take place.

The primary function of the internal community is to organize so that individuals feel their status is enhanced by cooperation with established community standards. As we have seen in the discussion on boundaries, one of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to demonize the outside elements. Polarizing those outside as evil and the inside as good creates an attitude of

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<sup>215</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 55.

<sup>216</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 40.

<sup>217</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 2.

<sup>218</sup> Parkim, “Introduction” in *The Anthropology of Evil* 19

superior status. This is the concept behind the ethnic cleansing that took place in the recent war in Bosnia. Being Serbian was superior. Non-Serbians could not contaminate Serbians. Our Battalion staff rode at train cross the border between Serbia and Macedonia in November of 1996. When we arrived at the Serbian border, all non-Serbians, excluding American soldiers in uniform, were required to exit the train and walk to a water pump. There they were required to wash their hands, face and feet. While this was being done Serbian railway workers sprayed disinfectant throughout the train.

Boundaries can also be erected to protect weaknesses and vulnerabilities by making them appear strong and then demonizing or cursing the value that challenges the status quo. Persons with different values are often perceived as pollution and they are labeled as evil or demonic. Mary Douglas defines "Pollution behavior" "as the reaction which condemns any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict cherished classifications."<sup>220</sup> I experienced this in the Sedelia Valley where the average education level of the residents was low. Many farmers had never finished High School. The stability of families was threatened with children leaving to receive an education and never returning. Rather than perceiving lack of education as a disadvantage, they reversed the value system so that "common sense" which all farmers had was superior to "book learning," their code word for higher education. Book learning could mess you up. This form of preservation was effective. Of approximately forty youth in

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<sup>219</sup> McCarty, *The Inner Heart of Ministry*, 65.

<sup>220</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36.

the valley that were close to my age three of us went to college. The small minority of us who left for college and came back were suspect once we returned. We were defiled by book learning. External conflict can strengthen a group's internal cohesion, which enhances the group's self-image. In this way conflict becomes the channel of blessing.<sup>221</sup> For Sedelia the external world offered the blessing of upward mobility. This posed a real threat to the stability of the community itself. They preserved the society by making their children feel superior or blessed if they choose the common sense found only on the farm. If they choose to leave, they risk the danger of polluting their minds. Soldiers need to be aware that just because something appears to be beneficial to a culture and thus a blessing, can be perceived as a curse.

#### **e. Body Fluids**

Mary Douglas points out that that the shedding of blood for food and sexual fluids for reproduction are necessary to survival but as outside body fluids, they are contaminations which must be cleansed before going into a holy place.

<sup>222</sup> In the Charan culture in India blood as an impure body secretion, was used for blackmail. As guardians of the gate or protectors of the Brahmins the Charans would demand huge payments for their services. The marriage of a Brahmins daughter became the means of collecting the fee. If the fee was not paid the Charan would commit tyag (a ritual act of ripping themselves open with

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<sup>221</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 85.

a sword) and splatter their blood on the wedding guest. The result would be utter social ruin for the Brahman. Forced to choose between poverty and public disgrace, many members of certain Rajput classes would kill their daughters at birth.<sup>223</sup>

#### **f. Ancestors role in External Social Control**

I represented my commander at the funeral of a Serbian who had been employed at McGovern Base in Bosnia. A meal was served before the funeral. Prior to eating the meal, everyone poured a sip of *tuica* (plumb brandy) on the floor for the deceased. One form of ancestor interaction is the sharing of a meal with the deceased. It is a common practice before eating and drinking to pour a bit of drink on the floor and to throw portions of food on the ground for the ancestors.<sup>224</sup> Ancestor worship can give the community as a whole a sense of corporate immortality.

This continuity becomes a means of preserving cultural heritage during times of cultural change. For example In 1957 in the Mongu District of Barotseland, Zambia there was a disease called *bindele* which was contracted when a victim was attacked by an ancestor spirit other than ones own ancestors. The attacker was a Western ancestor with whom this culture was in conflict. The

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<sup>222</sup> Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan, 1975), 271.

<sup>223</sup> Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 66-67.



disease could only be cured by a spirit from one's own ancestor who would then show the person who was healed how to heal others who remained loyal to their ancestors.

When social change occurs in spite of resistance, then the impact on ancestors must be taken into consideration in cultures where ancestral relationships are valued. During the Kintwadism movement among the Bakongo in the Congo, their culture was in process of reconstruction and changing moral standards. The graves of the ancestors were manicured in the hope that this might appease any wrath occurring in response to the accommodation of social changes from outside.<sup>225</sup> Handsome Lake, the leader of a Seneca Indian movement used the ancestors to implement accommodation. He began a religious movement, near the end of the nineteenth century, that retained some Indian values but replaced some with Christian values. The ancestors revealed to Handsome Lake that they were in what could be defined as a state of purgatory. They had done God's will but not completely, therefore they were not in Paradise or *Ganos'ge* (Hell).<sup>226</sup> Handsome Lake's teaching, which completed God's will, was thus endorsed by the ancestors.

Cultures in distress frequently evoke the power of the ancestors. Cultures under these circumstances sometimes seek sudden salvation from ancestors who are considered stronger men from a time when the present suffering did not

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<sup>224</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 57.

<sup>225</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 380.

exist.<sup>227</sup> In his book *Magic and the Millennium*, Brian Wilson calls these groups millennial movements. It was this belief in the mystical presence of their dead ancestors that led to disaster for the Xhosa in South Africa.<sup>228</sup> They had already been driven back by the Dutch and lost a large portion of their ancestral land. One day two Xhosa girls claimed to have met two of their ancestors while walking in a field. The ancestors told them the whole nation would rise from the dead and defeat their enemies if the Xhosa would kill all of their living cattle. The only way to appease the ancestors was to sacrifice that which was most valued. To many Xhosa this made perfect sense.<sup>229</sup> The result was the slaughter of 4,000 cattle. As a result 40,000 Xhosa starved to death. Even as the Xhosa were killing their cattle they were building new barns and cattle corrals to hold the grain and cattle their ancestors would be bringing.<sup>230</sup>

A millennial movement grew within the North American Indians during the time that they began to realize that their very existence was being threatened. The movement was built around the famous Ghost Dance. The Indian prophet Wovoka (Jack Wilson) envisioned the famous Ghost Dance when he contacted an illness, during which there was an eclipse of the sun. He had a vision of the spirit world in a land filled with game. God commissioned him to return and proclaim a message for his people to live peaceably, to love one another, and to

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<sup>226</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 391-392.

<sup>227</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 197.

<sup>228</sup> Elizabeth Isichei, *A history of Christianity in Africa : From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids : Eerdmans, 1995), 110.

<sup>229</sup> Milton, *The Edges of War*, 234.

<sup>230</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 240.

end the fighting and stealing from one another. The Ghost Dance he constituted became a ritual which embodied his vision. The dance and the message spread rapidly among the Plains Indians. Bryan Wilson quotes James Mooney in his book *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*: "Only those who have known the deadly hatred that once animated Ute, Cheyenne and Pawnee, one toward another, and are able to contrast it with their present spirit of mutual brotherly love, can know what the Ghost-dance religion has accomplished in bringing the savage to civilization." <sup>231</sup>

Ancestors role as providers of the unexplained have played a role in various Cargo cults who look to their ancestors to provide for them the material wealth they see evident in European culture. In New Guinea a movement emerged called the Vailala Madness. The Vailala believed that their ancestors would return in a steamer filled with European Cargo. <sup>232</sup> The Europeans from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company treated the cult workers as people with no status. The cult emerged to bring back their ancestors who had the status that had been stripped away by the Europeans.

Some millennial movements incorporate Biblical themes learned from missionaries. A Melanesian cult created a Christ figure *Manup* who was to return after being persecuted and crucified by the Jews. *Manup* would bring cargo first to the ancestors and then to the cult. This movement arose out of the

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<sup>231</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 297.

<sup>232</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 318-322.

belief that the missionaries were cheating by not revealing parts of their religion that enabled them to obtain their material wealth.<sup>233</sup>

A similar movement occurred in Melanesian culture. The arrival of wealthy Europeans brought jealousy and demand for the commodities which the Europeans owned. From this emerged the belief that ancestors would bring shiploads of these items. Melanesian cult groups built wharfs, airstrips, roads and storehouses for the expected blessings to be received from their ancestors.

<sup>234</sup> Another Manseren legend indigenous to Indonesia was based on the exile of the Israelites. They believe that their domination by European strangers is punishment for their sins. When they have been sufficiently punished then there is a hidden father who will intervene on their behalf.<sup>235</sup>

Three important issues when soldiers encounter ancestors veneration. The first is that ancestors are a force to be reckoned with. Wilson describes the power of this force: "When men acquire a notion of the ancestors of the spirits initiating change they have experienced a radical transformation of consciousness."<sup>236</sup> A Second issue is the treatment of land. In some cultures land belongs to the ancestors.<sup>237</sup> By disturbing the land you are playing in a mind/minefield. Even the sale of land may be a volatile issue. During the Boer Wars in South Africa the Xhosa believed that the ancestors were inseparable

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<sup>233</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 331.

<sup>234</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 312.

<sup>235</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 205-206.

<sup>236</sup> Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium*, 495.

from the land where they were buried. This belief had a dramatic psychological impact on the Xhosa when the Boers drove them from their land east of the Fish river. The Xhosa lost not only their land, which was economically important, but they also they lost the mystical attachment to their ancestors including the ancestor's blessing and protection.<sup>238</sup> This psychological impact was a contributing factor in the millennial movement that eventually led to their attack on the Grahamstown settlement. Ancestral land is also an issue for the Muslim refugees in Brka, Bosnia. Having been forced out of Brcko, the land of their ancestors, was a traumatic event. The possibility of rebuilding in new location was not satisfactory.<sup>239</sup>

Finally, soldiers need to be cautious of rituals involving ancestors. In the Cholla province of Korea in 1790 Yun Chi-ch-'ung, a Christian, in accordance with instructions from priest in Peking, burnt his mother's ancestral tablet. This event threatened the fundamental values of Confucianism. In the eyes of the Koreans his actions constituted a curse on their whole society. Don Baker translates the response recorded in *Yi Nung-hwa, Choson Kidokkyo gup woegysa (The History of Christianity and Foreign Relations in Korea)*, "Almost universally Yun was condemned as having descended to the level of beast and barbarians and he was executed for his affront to the Confucian tradition."<sup>240</sup> In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* a participant in an ancestor ritual pulls off the mask

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<sup>237</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 59.

<sup>238</sup> Hodgson, "A Battle for Sacred Power, 71.

<sup>239</sup> Parrinder, *African traditional religion*, 60.

of an actor. When the ancestor's mask is torn away from the actor, the spirit he is portraying is perceived as killed, unleashing the wrath of all the ancestors.<sup>241</sup> Like Yun, he too was killed. The belief in the power of ancestors contains volatile mine/mindfields. Tread cautiously.

#### **f. Divine Power**

Just as divine sanction is important to maintain internal social order it is important to have God or the gods on your side against your enemies as well. This is evident in Chief Two Moon's recollection of a conversation with Chief Sitting Bull just before the battle of the Little Big Horn.

“Here the old man pauses a moment, and his face took on a lofty and somber expression. ‘I believe at the time the Great Spirits had made the Sioux, [and] put them there,’ and white men and the Cheyenne here” -indicating two places to the left- expecting them to fight; The Great Spirits, I thought., liked to see the fight; it was to them all the same like playing. So I thought then about fighting.’ As he said this, he made me feel for one moment the power of a sardonic god whose drama was the wars of men. “<sup>242</sup>

### **3. A Summery of Boundaries**

Nicholas Stamdeart, makes an analogy that is important for soldiers

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<sup>240</sup> Don Baker, “A Confucian Confronts Catholicism: Truth Collides with Morality in Eighteenth-Century Korea”, *Korean Studies Forum* 6 (1979/1980): 1-41. [=41 pages], 7.

<sup>241</sup> Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 186.

crossing cultural boundaries. Stamdeart compares the entry of outsiders into a new culture to the transplanting of an organ into a new body. Not just one but both entities react differently to the new environment. Therefore, the concern is not only the reaction of the body to the new environment but the reaction of the transplanted organ as well.<sup>243</sup> Stamdeart has developed a model that shows different levels of absorption or rejection when cultures interact: absorption < addition < selection < counter accommodation < contextualization > hybridation > substitution > skepticism > rejection.<sup>244</sup>

Sometimes the transported person does not adjust to the boundaries of a new culture. A few years after leaving Austria, I was at mission's conference where I met a former missionary who returned from a similar two-year assignment. She had found Austrian culture to be cold and inhospitable and was eager to return to America. It seemed obvious to me that she never adjusted to Austrian culture. When soldiers cross boundaries, you must be concerned with their reaction as well as the reaction of the indigenous community. When soldiers enter a culture, many dynamics figure into the outcome. For integration to be successful, both the nationals and the soldiers must make adjustments. It is not simply a matter of the soldiers adjusting to a new culture. The culture must adjust to the presence of soldiers. The reaction may be to attempt to rid the

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<sup>242</sup> "Hamlin Garlind's Interview with Two Moons" in *Cheyenne Memories of the Custer Fight: A Source Book*, ed. Richard G. Hardorff, Frontier Military Series XVIII (Spokane, Washington: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1995),

<sup>243</sup> Nicholas Stamdeart, "Reflections on the Handbook of Christianity in China" (lecture to at the Institute for Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, 15 November 2000), To be published in 2001 University of Levin.

body of the transplant, which is perceived as a virus. This view necessitates the elimination of not only the soldiers, but for the sake of preservation all who have been contaminated by the support of their presence. Soldiers can endanger someone's life by innocent contact.

### **3. An Application of Cultural Boundaries**

I wrote a paper on accommodating of the practice of Islam in the military for a class in Islam at Princeton University. As I was studying Islam in America the effect of cultural barriers on Muslims in America became obvious. I will use this model as an example of cultural boundaries. It should be noted that Islamic culture is extremely complex and that I am making broad generalizations. I will first give a brief history between Muslims and the West, which formed the boundaries which exist today. I will show that this tension has produced clear boundaries between Americans and Muslims immigrants in America. I will point out significant influences that reinforce those boundaries. Finally I will show the impact these boundaries have on second generation Muslims living in America and on American converts to Islam. Diagrams for these boundaries are found in appendix A.

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<sup>244</sup> Nicholas Stamdeart, "Reflections on the Handbook of Christianity in China"



### a. Historical Background

The tension between Muslims and the West emerged with the rivalry of expansion between Christianity and Islam. Islam as taught by Muhammad quickly became antagonistic to both Christianity and Judaism.<sup>245</sup> The political conflict between Islam and the West was intensified with the expansion of Muslim rule into Europe between the eighth and seventeenth centuries. By the tenth century there were many texts written by Muslim and Christian theologians criticizing the others religion.<sup>246</sup> The animosity between the two political powers was intensified by the Crusades in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries. Although the crusades directly affected only a small minority of Muslims, the psychological consequences felt throughout the Muslim world were significant. In fact, the Ottoman Empire, as Muslims perceived it, according to some historians, was not so much an internal social unifier as it was a bulwark against the perceived danger of the Christians.<sup>247</sup> Christian Europe is still stirred by pictures of the Muslim hordes outside the gates of Vienna in 1529.<sup>248</sup>

Repercussions were also felt in the literature that emerged in the Near East during that period. Christians, who were before classified as polytheists

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<sup>245</sup> Muhammad Akbar, "Muslim Relations in the United States," in *Muslim minorities in the west*, ed. Z. Abedin Syed and Ziauddin Sardar, (London : Grey Seal, 1995), 160.

<sup>246</sup> Jacques, Waardenburg, "The Medieval Period:650-1500," 45.

<sup>247</sup> Mattias Gardell, "North America" in. *Islam outside the Arab world* ed. David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg, (Richmond : Curzon, 1999). Gardell, Mattias "North America" in. *Islam outside the Arab world* ed. David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg, (Richmond : Curzon, 1999). 160-162.

<sup>248</sup> Adam Lebor, *A Heart Turned East: Among the Muslims of Europe and America* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1997), 294.

*mushrikun*, were now classified as unbelievers *kuffar*.<sup>249</sup> To be called a *kuffar* condemns that individual to Hell. This definitely has the perlocutionary intent of cursing. Christians scholars in the West such as Peter of Alfonso, and Peter the Venerable, armed with a translation of the Quran into Latin, launched an equally literary attack of cursing upon Islam.<sup>250</sup> European Painters attacked Muslims as well. An interesting example of demonizing the enemy is found in European art of the Middle Ages. Many paintings of this era, depict villains such as the Roman soldiers who were flogging Jesus, as Muslims dressed in Muslim clothing. This is an excellent example of non-verbal cursing. One of the places to discover what is blessed and what is cursed within a culture is in the Art and literature of that particular culture.

The conflict continued during the period of Western Colonialism over Muslim countries. The negative attitude toward Muslims during Colonialism was due to European politics, greed, and racial and cultural chauvinism, which viewed Muslims as “backward peoples.”<sup>251</sup> During this period information about Muslim culture came to the West through colonialist missionaries and humanist writers whose reports were often laced with distorted images.<sup>252</sup> Muslims under colonial rule felt they were under the subjection of infidels and Western ideas challenged the authority of the Muslim religious elite.<sup>253</sup> A feeling of Western superiority over Muslim peoples was reinforced in the twentieth century by

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<sup>249</sup> Waardenburg, “The Medieval Period:650-1500,” 45.

<sup>250</sup> Waardenburg, “The Medieval Period:650-1500,” 46.

<sup>251</sup> Akbar, “Muslim Relations in the United States,” 164.

<sup>252</sup> Akbar, “Muslim Relations in the United States,” 164.

technological advancement, military dominance and secularism.<sup>254</sup> Bert Breiner in an article on “Lessons from History Towards a Mythology of Christian-Muslim Relations states, “Addressing the history of Muslim and Christian relations “...Human beings tend to bear grudges. They often remember past hurts and let these affect their relationships with others.”<sup>255</sup> This grudge is evident in the boundaries that exist between Muslims Western civilizations. Jacques Waardenburg, in the Book *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions* gives an excellent historical summary of Muslim Western relations.

## **b. Muslim Boundaries**

A description of Muslim boundaries must begin with Allah. The first pillar of Islam is called the *Shahada*, or witness, “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is God’s messenger. The practice of Islam is grounded in duty to God who wants you to obey his commands.<sup>256</sup> In Islam God is in a boundary excluded from all others. According to Muslim’s, only Muhammad, not even Jesus Christ, has penetrated God’s boundary. This occurred only once on the night of power *Lailatul-Qadr* . The other four pillars of Islam are the five daily ritual prayers, *salat* , the Tithe *zakat*. Fasting during the month of Ramadan and

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<sup>253</sup> Akbar, “Muslim Relations in the United States,” 162-164.

<sup>254</sup> Akbar, “Muslims in the United States: An Overview of Organizations, p 215

<sup>255</sup> Bert Breiner, “Lessons from History Towards a Mythology of Christian-Muslim Relations,” in *My neighbour is Muslim: a handbook for Reformed Churches. Format* (Genève : Centre International Réformé John Knox, c1990), 94.

<sup>256</sup> Fredrick M. Denny, “Ethical Dimensions of Islamic Ritual Law” in *Religion and law : Biblical-Judaic and Islamic perspectives* / ed. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss, John W. Welch. ( Winona Lake : Eisenbrauns, 1990), 207.

the Pilgrimage to Mecca called the *hajj*. The study will concentrate on *salat*, and *Ramadan* because of their emphasis on the purity which protects the belief of the holiness of God.

Muhammad Mahmud Al-Sawwaf describes the importance of the five daily ritual prayers in *The Muslim Book of Prayer*. "The Law of Islam admonishes severely its members and requires of them sincere adherence to Islamic law through the continuous practice of prayer, the most important pillar of Islam and the greatest of religious duties."<sup>257</sup> If one of the five daily prayers is missed, it has to be made up. There are no exceptions except when traveling; four of the prayers are combined allowing for only three prayer times. The importance of prayer is stressed in Muslim folklore. In the story of Zobeide in *The Book of A Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, the residents of a town are turned to stone because they stop praying. Because of their material wealth they no longer feel dependent upon God. One soul survivor, who has been faithful in prayer, remains.<sup>258</sup> Sebrenic castle, where I cursed the tour guide, is perched on a high hill that is only accessible by a suspended bridge. Below the castle in a deep gorge, are the scattered stones from an old bridge. The legend, as told by our Muslim tour guide, was that a Muslim engineer was given the task of constructing the bridge. Seeing the length and depth of the gorge the engineer called for prayer, convinced that without God's help the project was impossible. When the

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<sup>257</sup> Muhammad Mahmud Al-Sawwaf, , *The Muslim Book of Prayer*, trans. Muhammad Mahmud Al-Sawwaf, (Doha: Dar Al Uloom Est.,) 4.

<sup>258</sup> Frances Gumley and Brian Redhead, *Pillars of Islam : an introduction to the Islamic faith* (London : BBC Books, 1990). 40.

bridge was half completed the construction had gone so smoothly that the engineer stated that perhaps they could finish it without prayer. That night the bridge fell and they were unable to complete the project. This is an excellent example of using a fable as a speech act of warning to reinforce a boundary evoking the fear of being cursed. The message is clear. If you ignore dependence on God through prayer, disaster will be the consequence.

The performance of prayer is accompanied by several ritual practices designed to emphasize and protect the sovereignty and purity of God. The purpose for the emphasis on cleanliness is because contamination denies God's blessing. To be restored as a place of blessing the Holy Place and the worshiper must be cleansed.<sup>259</sup> Muslims must therefore follow a strict purification procedure. If they have urinated, or defecated, passed wind, or if body parts have come into contact with any body secretions such as blood, pus, semen, or vaginal fluids, they must be ritually cleaned prior to prayer.

In addition to the purification rituals Muslims also need a clean area in which to pray. The area should also be free of any pictures or non-Muslim symbols. The role of symbols will be discussed later in this paper. Prayer itself is a form of purification. Muhammad compared prayer to the mental bathing of a dirty body.<sup>260</sup> A final element of prayer is the ritual bowing. A formal ritual of bowing and symbolic gestures accompany the daily prayers. The purpose is to

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<sup>259</sup> Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 31.

<sup>260</sup> Janet Ardavan, *Growing Up Islam* (London : Longman, 1990), 13.

show humility before God. Von Grunebaum, in his book *Mohammedan Festivals*, explains the significance of bowing by quoting the famous teacher from al-Azhar, Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali: "Whenever you place yourself in the place of lowliness, you know that you have placed it in its proper place and have returned the branch to the trunk, for of the dust you were formed and to it you return."<sup>261</sup>

Next to *salat* in the boundary diagram is the practice of fasting during the Holy Month of *Ramadan*. The month of *Ramadan* is the month that the *Quran* was revealed to the prophet Muhammad on *Lailatul-Qadr* or the night of power.<sup>262</sup> This reinforces the purity of God by honoring the revelation of the Koran through Muhammad as God's greatest prophet and the *Quran* as the most important revelation to man. The idea of a "holy" month was a familiar concept in pagan Arabia.<sup>263</sup> Fasting began in Islam when, due to Jewish influence, Muhammad commanded his followers to fast on the Day of Atonement *Ashura*. After his relationship with the Jews deteriorated, he replaced the *Ashura* fast with a fasting obligation for a certain number of days during the month of *Ramadan*, still following the Jewish practice of fasting from sunset to sunset. A new revelation then modified the practice from dawn till sunset for both eating and sexual abstinence.<sup>264</sup> Fasting is also a means of purification. In *Better than a Thousand Months* Hassaun Ali Jones-Bey, used the analogy of cleaning her

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<sup>261</sup> Von Grunebaum, . *Muhammadan Festivals*, 12.

<sup>262</sup> Hassaun Ali Jones-Bey, , *Better than a Thousand Months: An American Muslim Family Celebration*, (Freemont, CA: Ibm Musa, 1996), 18.

<sup>263</sup> Von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, 52.

<sup>264</sup> Von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, 51-52.

room for company to visit, to explain *Ramadan* to his young daughter.<sup>265</sup>

*Ramadan* includes abstaining from food, drink, and sex between dawn and sunset.<sup>266</sup> Smoking is also prohibited during the *Ramadan* fast.<sup>267</sup> In addition, Muslims are expected to refrain from slander during *Ramadan*. One must behave in a way that is pleasing to God.<sup>268</sup>

The next boundary in Muslim culture combines women and dress. The two are related because dress is a key component in the concept of purity as it applies to women. As strange as it may sound there may be a relationship between the dress code for women and the Muslim prohibition of the consumption of pork. Douglas points out that for the Jews the pig is the ultimate defilement. It does not meet the animal criterion, it eats carrion, it is eaten by non-Israelites and has immoral sexual practices. Douglas indicates the last may be the most repulsive for the Jews who must maintain order to protect purity in sexual practice.<sup>269</sup> The culture of Arabs and Jews are extremely similar in their practice of dietary law. Sexual purity outside of marriage is an important issue in many cultures and extreme measures are taken in some cultures to protect pureness. In Middle Eastern culture sexual purity is not just a private matter.

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<sup>265</sup> Jones-Bey, *Better than a Thousand Months*, 85.

<sup>266</sup> Hakim Abdul Hameed, "Beliefs and Practices of a Muslim" in *Islam at a Glance*, ed. Hakeem, Abdul Hameed (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD for Indian Institute of Islamic Studies, 1981), 41.

<sup>267</sup> Rashid Ahman Chaudhri, *Muslim Festivals and Ceremonies* (London: London Mosque, 1983), 18.

<sup>268</sup> Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri, *The Elements of Islam* (Rockport, Massachusetts: Element Books Limited, 1993), 40.

<sup>269</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology*, 272.

Sexual sin is not just against the victim but family as well.<sup>270</sup> There are strong boundaries in Muslim culture protecting the family lineage. In the Bosnian war Serbian soldiers were well aware of this boundary. After raping Muslim women they would knock out their front teeth as visual reminder that this boundary of purity had been violated. The primary consideration in Muslim dress is to create a boundary to enhance sexual purity. In a book written for Muslims practicing Islam in America, *What is Lawful and what is Prohibited*, Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi states:

“Looking at the *'awrah* (*Awrah* (*lit.*, that which is to be hidden) denotes those parts of the body which Islam requires to be covered in front of others. The *'awrah* of a man referred to in this *hadith* is from his navel to his knee, although some scholars, such as Ibn Hazm and some Maliki jurists, do not include the knee. With respect to a man who is not her *mahrem*, a woman's *'awrah* is her entire body excepting only her face and hands... What Islam prohibits in the sphere of sex includes looking at a member of the opposite sex with desire; for the eye is the key to the feelings, and the look is a messenger of desire, carrying the message of fornication or adultery. A poet of ancient times has said, 'All affairs begin with the sight; The raging fire a spark can ignite,' Indeed, such hungry and lustful looks are not merely a danger to chastity but they also result in agitation of the mind and disturbed thoughts.”<sup>271</sup>

Sexual purity is a strong barrier in Islam and dress is one of the primary means of enforcing this barrier. Another way of enforcing this barrier is to keep males and females separated. *The Parents Manual: A Guide For Muslim*

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<sup>270</sup> Charles O. Frake, “Struck by Speech: The Yakan Concept of Litigation,” in *Directions In Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, ed. John J. Gumperz and Dale Hymes, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc, 1972), 119.

<sup>271</sup> Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *What is Lawful and what is Prohibited*. Islamic Interlink <http://www.qaradawi.net/> February 12, 2001



*Parents Living in North America* explains, Muslim youth are not to participate in any outing where males and females are mixed.<sup>272</sup> Dating or any other activity where girls and boys are alone together is prohibited.<sup>273</sup>

The dietary laws are placed in a boundary of their own. Dietary practice is not one of the five pillars of Islam but this practice is extremely important to the concept of purity. Muslims believe in following Islamic dietary regulations for what is allowed *halal* and refraining from eating forbidden *haram* foods. For some, their motivation is for health reasons, an important consideration for almost all Muslims.<sup>274</sup> There is disagreement over the many Muslim dietary restrictions that have passed through the system of jurisprudence in Islam. The common restrictions agreed upon in general include; alcohol, carrion, blood, any pork products, or anything that has been sacrificed to an idol.<sup>275</sup> Muslims are prohibited from eating the meat of any animal that has not been properly slaughtered by a Muslim “People of the Book,” Christians or Jews.<sup>276</sup>

The evil outside of the Muslim boundaries, especially in relation to America, is materialism and immorality. The amount of alcohol, drug addiction, nudity, homosexuality, fornication, adultery, and the emphasis on materialism in the United States causes Muslims to view the United States as an immoral

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<sup>272</sup> *Parents Manual: A Guide For Muslim Parents Living in North America*, 59.

<sup>273</sup> *Parents Manual: A Guide For Muslim Parents Living in North America*, 81.

<sup>274</sup> Kanbiz GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States: A Study of Los Angeles*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), 56.

<sup>275</sup> GhaneaBassiri, Kanbiz, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States: A Study of Los Angeles*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), 5.

<sup>276</sup> Omar Bakre Mohammad, *Essential Fiqh* (London, The Islamic Book Company, 1995), 41.

society.<sup>277</sup> Some of the values of North American culture that challenge traditional Islam are; failure to segregate males and females, the fact that Muslim holidays are ignored, the lack of places for daily prayers, pressure on youth to conform to American dating patterns and friendship codes, an economy linked to charging interest, and the fact that public food manufacturers are not concerned with dietary laws and may put pork derivatives in something as innocent as a cookie.<sup>278</sup> Muslims are also deeply concerned about the values learned by their children in public schools. Muslim activists view American Christians as infidels and groups such as the Muslim brethren see Christians as hypocritical. For most Arab Muslims, the coexistence of Christians and Muslims is perceived as a problem.<sup>279</sup> Muslims view many aspects of American culture as the evil outside.

### **c. American Boundaries Against Muslims**

Americans have also established boundaries that affect the way they perceive Muslims. At the heart of American boundaries is freedom. Americans believe that the freedom that allows pluralism and personal autonomy is healthy. Freedom in America stands for individuality and structures that are more tolerant of diversity. We want to have autonomy in our homes, our businesses and our

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<sup>277</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 44.

<sup>278</sup> Earl H. Waugh, "North America and the Adaptation of the Muslim Tradition: Religion, Ethnicity and the Family", in *Muslim Families in North America*, ed. Earl H. Waugh, Sharon McIrvine Abu-Laban and Regula Burckhardt Qureshi (Ontario, Canada: John Deyell Company, 1991), 79-80.

<sup>279</sup> Tarek Mitri, "Christian-Muslim Relations in the Arab World," in *My neighbour is Muslim: a handbook for Reformed Churches. Format* (Genève : Centre International Réformé John Knox, c1990), 10.

religions.<sup>280</sup> One of the most cherished American freedoms is the free exercise of religion. Americans revere this freedom, associated with names such as Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry. Many colonists came to America in order to practice religious freedom. Americans have sought to erect boundaries to protect this cherished value. Roger Williams, a pioneer of religious freedom in frontier America, described religion as a “garden in the wilderness,” a haven of morality and truth that had to be protected against the state.<sup>281</sup>

“Americans abide by the principle that the liberty to choose one’s faith and practice it without inhibition are essential to the function of a free society.”<sup>282</sup> The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in 1791. “The first words of the United States Bill of Rights protect the freedom of religion: ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise there of....’ ”<sup>283</sup> For this reason I place the boundary of religious freedom as a separate boundary even though it is an aspect of freedom. In order to protect freedom Americans have formed boundaries that exclude freedom for all.

Mattias Gordell in an article “North America” provides an interesting insight into American boundaries. “Rather than being a melting pot, American society has often been divided by who should be included and who should be excluded.”<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Bette Novit Evans, “The Free Exercise of Religion,” in *International perspectives on church and state* ed. Menachem Mor, (Omaha, Neb.: Center for the Study of Religion and Society, Creighton University Press ; Bronx, NY : Fordham University Press, c1993), 18.

<sup>281</sup> Evans, “The Free Exercise of Religion,” 17.

<sup>282</sup> K. Lasson, “Religious liberty in the Military the First Amendment under fire” in *International Perspectives on Church and State* ed. Menachem Mor, (Omaha, Neb.:Center for the Study of Religion and Society, Creighton University Press; Bronx, NY:Fordham University Press,c1993), 92.

<sup>283</sup> *Chaplain Activities in the United States Army*, AR 165-1, 1998,1-4 c.

<sup>284</sup> Mattias Gardell, “North America” in. *Islam outside the Arab world* ed. David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg, (Richmond : Curzon, 1999).439.

Racism against Muslims in America has yet to be overcome.<sup>285</sup> Gardell gives a good example of this. When Muslims became successful in a low budget motel chain a competitor advertised as "American owned and operated" questioning the citizenship of the Muslims.<sup>286</sup> Another example of this boundary of discrimination occurred in Los Angeles when residents opposed a permit for a small parking lot for a mosque. Across the street a permit for an additional 200 parking spaces for a Christian school met no opposition.<sup>287</sup> Jerry McNabb, in a study of attitudes towards Muslims in America describes this boundary, "I surmised that the problem was that to most Christians, Islam is still a great mystery and a heathen religion that must be avoided or converted. There must be no in-between. If conversion cannot take place, then Muslims must be isolated and associated with only in the work environment or in a professional relationship."<sup>288</sup> This demonstrated that for many Americans freedom of religions means constructing boundaries to protect main line religions such as Christianity and Judaism from other religions. When statements are made that The United States was founded on a Judeo-Christian ethic, the statement indicates a boundary against anything that is not Jewish or Christian.

A new glaringly prominent boundary has emerged in Muslim-American relations with the establishment of the Nation of Israel. The establishment of the

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<sup>285</sup> Muhammad Akbar, "Muslims in the United States," 215.

<sup>286</sup> Gardell, "North America" 439.

<sup>287</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 77.

<sup>288</sup> Jerry McNabb, "Reconciliatory Servant Evangelism: The Accommodation of Islam into the Traditionally Judeo-Christian Military Community of the United States Navy" (Regent University School of Divinity: A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Regent University School of Divinity, December 1999), 77.

Nation of Israel intensified the tension that already existed. President George Bush referred to this boundary in his debate with Democratic candidate Al Gore in the presidential debate. "Israel is our friend and we stand by our friends."<sup>289</sup> This statement designed to elevate the status of Israel is an example of a political blessing where a blessing is used to elicit the support of a particular group. It is interesting that The American Muslim Political Coordinating Council Political Action Committee (AMPCC-PAC) endorsed George W. Bush for president, citing, "his outreach to the Muslim community and his pledge to end the use of secret evidence in INS deportation hearings."<sup>290</sup> President Bush may well have felt a political need to reinforce America's boundary of support for Israel.

"Unconditional support of Israel, regardless of how they treat Arabs is perceived by many Muslims as a Judeo-Christian conspiracy against Islam."<sup>291</sup> I

experienced this injustice first hand riding in an Arab Taxi from Jerusalem to Nazareth. We were stopped numerous times by Israeli Police. The driver would immediately let the police know that he was carrying Americans. He explained that if Americans were not his passengers, he would have been subjugated to extensive interrogation on each occasion. I wondered if he was exaggerating to promote the Palestinian position, but the American missionaries riding with me affirmed that he was telling the truth. This boundary has been enforced by the Jewish lobby in the US that has become very sensitive to any newspaper articles

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<sup>289</sup> Presidential Debate, University of Massachusetts, October 3, 2000.

<sup>290</sup> "Action Alert # 276" Council on American-Islamic Relations, (Washington, D.C. 20003) News Release 11/8/00 URL: <http://www.cair-net.org/>

<sup>291</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, , *A Century of Islam in America* ( Washington, D.C. : American Institute for Islamic Affairs, School of International Service, The American University, 1986), 9.

that are not pro-Israeli. It is interesting that prior to the creation of Israel, Jews in the US did not have negative attitudes toward Arabs and Islam.<sup>292</sup>

Dress is also a boundary for Americans. During the Colonialism of the nineteenth century Western dress was equated with being civilized. Missionary Robert Moffat, speaking of Xhosa converts in South Africa indicates this in the following statement: "Instead of greasing their bodies, rubbing themselves with red earth, they dress in European clothes; in coats, trousers, petticoats and frocks."<sup>293</sup> Adrian Hastings in *The Church in Africa*, points out that Robert Moffat could not understand how Africans could refuse to wear European clothes.<sup>294</sup> Missionary wives taught Xhosa girls in the mission station to make dresses and bonnets.<sup>295</sup> Americans place a barrier between themselves and those who do not wear western clothes. This barrier of dress is expressed by this statement by Janet Ardavan in her book *Growing Up Islam*, "When I first came to this school, I really minded some of the things people used to say about the way I dress. They just assumed that nobody could actually want to wear things like this and that someone was making me do it. ... They see my way of dressing as a form of oppression, whereas we see it as a form of liberation."<sup>296</sup> Kanbiz GhaneaBassiri, in *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*

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<sup>292</sup> Sulayman S. Nyang, *Islam in the United States of America* (Chicago: ABC International Group, 1999), 125.

<sup>293</sup> Robert Moffat, *Labors and Scenes in Southern Africa* (New York: University Press, 1843), 7.

<sup>294</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 205.

<sup>295</sup> Hodgson, "A Battle for Sacred Power, 74.

<sup>296</sup> Ardavan, *Growing Up Islam*, 47.

discovered that the incidents of discrimination were higher for females who wore traditional Islamic dress.<sup>297</sup>

I have already explained how Muslims use the fear of the outside evils of immorality and materialism to reinforce their boundaries against the West. Americans reinforce their boundary using fear of the outside evil of terrorism. There are several events that have significantly shaped and reinforced the American psyche in their perception of Muslims as terrorists. In addition to the Arab Israeli conflict, which often includes acts of terrorism, memorable events include the Iranian revolution which resulted in the confinement of American hostages, the Civil War in Lebanon and the bombing of the US Marine barracks, the emergence of Muammar Quaddafi, and the explosion of the Pan Am flight over Lockerby Scotland, the bombing of the World Trade Center, the bombing of the American Embassy in Nairobi, and most recently the bombing of the USS Cole. The key event in the perception of Muslims in the United States, because it occurred on American soil, was the bombing of the World Trade Center. As the United States portrays itself as the defender of liberty, some Americans have replaced Ronald Ragan's "evil empire", with terrorists, as the evil outside Americas boundaries.<sup>298</sup> "What is disturbing," as pointed out by Sulayman S. Nyang, "is the emerging view that Islam = Arabs = fundamentalism = terrorism."<sup>299</sup> The first response of most Americans to the words Muslim or Islam for most

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<sup>297</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 72

<sup>298</sup> Gardell, "North America" 420.

<sup>299</sup> Nyang, *Islam in the United States of America*, 129.

Americans is terrorists.<sup>300</sup> A survey conducted by Jerry McNabb in his class on Muslim awareness showed that "The majority believed that most Arabs were terrorist, all Arabs were Muslims, and the Quran was evil..."<sup>301</sup> This association labels all Muslims as potential terrorist. When an act of terrorism occurs many Americans assume the act was committed by a Muslim.

The result of this perception was demonstrated in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. Following this tragic event there were many documented reports of incidents of drive by shootings, physical assaults, property damage, police abuse, intimidation, threats, and harassment against Muslims.<sup>302</sup> Adam Lebor quotes the despair of Abdel Hakim Mustapha, an African-American Muslim author and activist concerning the frustration of this image, "We Muslims will be the new communists. This country has always needed a bogeyman. We had the red threat and now it's the Islamic one... I'm a Muslim fundamentalist. That doesn't mean I'm ready to blow up a bridge. It means I strive to practice my religion in pristine purity."<sup>303</sup>

Many credible sources have reinforced this view of the Muslim threat. A 1992 Pentagon report identified radical Islam as the one remaining threat against a United States led New World Order.<sup>304</sup> In his 1990 Jefferson Lecture to

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<sup>300</sup> Lebor, *A Heart Turned East*, 258.

<sup>301</sup> McNabb, "Reconciliatory Servant Evangelism," 100.

<sup>302</sup> "A Rush To Judgment : A Special Report on Anti-Muslim Stereotyping, Harassment and Hate Crimes Following the Bombing of Oklahoma City's Murrah Federal Building, April 19, 1995," (Washington D.C.: American-Islamic Relations, September. 1995), 9-17.

<sup>303</sup> Lebor, *A Heart Turned East*, 147.

<sup>304</sup> Gardell, "North America," 420.



Congress, distinguished American Islamologist Bernard Lewis portrayed the Islamic challenge as a clash of civilizations.<sup>305</sup> In November 1994 PBS aired Steve Emerson's documentary called *Jihad in America*. This documentary, based on sources like Israeli intelligence, argued that Muslims had an elaborate political, financial and operational infra structure whose goal was a Holy War (*jihad*) prepared to kill their enemies, especially Jews and supporters of Israel in the United States.<sup>306</sup> According to Haddad, some of the rhetoric that Islam has replaced that communist threat to the United States, is perpetuated by Israel, who wants to maintain its US support.<sup>307</sup> The main contributor to this image has been the Western press. The cover of the November 19,1990, issue of *The National Review* showed men on camels with turbans on their heads and sticks in their hands charging toward the camera. The caption read: "THE MUSLIMS ARE COMING THE MUSLIMS ARE COMING."<sup>308</sup> The media's need for the sensational headlines continues to focus on the extremist and violent factions of Islam rather than the peaceful majority who practice the Muslim faith.<sup>309</sup> Misrepresentations are most dangerous when they emphasize hatred and intolerance. Unfortunately the boundaries between Muslims in America and the culture that surrounds them has created this type of environment.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Gardell, "North America" 420.

<sup>306</sup> Lebor, *A Heart Turned East*, 268.

<sup>307</sup> Haddad, "The Dynamics of Islamic Identity in North America," 29.

<sup>308</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 8.

<sup>309</sup> John L. Esposito, *Muslims in America or American Muslims in Muslims on the American Path?*

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<sup>310</sup> Breiner, "Lessons from History Towards a Mythology, 95.

#### **d. The Accommodation of American Values by Second Generation Muslims**

Many second and third generation Muslims in America feel like I felt in Austria. They may perceive themselves as having several identities; Islamic, Muslim, Arab, or American.<sup>311</sup> The inner struggle of many Muslim youth in America is reflected in this statement of a young Druze Muslim. "Sometimes we want to be more American, and sometimes more Druze"<sup>312</sup> The struggle with accommodation is evident.

Gumperz points out that contextually marked modes that are associated with a given context can be mapped into a new context. This is what occurred with second generation Muslims living in America.<sup>313</sup> The most important American value accommodated within the boundary system of most second generation Muslims is freedom. Many Muslims find that they have more personal religious freedom here. Muslims in the United States can practice their own personal understanding of Islam without fear of the community, the state, or religious police intervening.<sup>314</sup> Adam Lebor states, "In many ways you are freer to be a Muslim in America than in many Muslim countries. I've lived and traveled in Muslim countries. You can't write a letter to the editor there, you can't hold a

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<sup>311</sup> Nimat Hafez Barazangi, "Parents and Youth Perceiving and Practicing Islam in North America" in *Muslim Families in North America*, ed. Earl H. Waugh, Sharon McIrvin Abu-Laban and Regula Burckhardt Qureshi (Ontario, Canada: John Deyell Company, 1991), 133.

<sup>312</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, and Jane Idelman, *Mission to America : five Islamic sectarian communities in North America* (Gainesville : University Press of Florida, c1993), 44.

<sup>313</sup> Gumperz, *Directions In Sociolinguistics*, 18.

<sup>314</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 11-12.

protest sign in front of an embassy, you can't do anything that is at variance with the government or dictator that happens to be in power there.”<sup>315</sup> Where as opposing views are perceived as a threat to stability in many Muslim countries, Americans value individuality. This difference in thinking has lead to many American Muslims rejecting Muslim authorities and forming their own view of Islam.<sup>316</sup> New boundaries are drawn where freedom is protected.

The accommodation of the American view of the role of women is widely accommodated by Muslims. Even those Muslims in the United States who advocate a strict observance to Islam may feel differently on some issues such as the treatment of women. For example in the study done by Kanbiz, GhaneaBassiri one fourth of those advocating strict adherence to Islam believed women should be allowed to lead prayers.<sup>317</sup> In a guidebook for Muslim parents in America on the Internet, parents are instructed to be sure not to exclude wives and daughters from the prayer times.<sup>318</sup> Another accommodation of freedom is in relation to the way that Americans value inner consciousness above outward appearance in relation to the practice of religion. Nimat Hafez Barazangi in his study of second generation Muslims saw a disconnect between parents who equated Islam with certain outward practices such as the daily prayers, and their children who were more concerned with inner consciousness and being judged

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<sup>315</sup> Lebor, *A Heart Turned East*, 247.

<sup>316</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 50.

<sup>317</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 52

<sup>318</sup> Parenting Web Page *Sound Vision Islamic Information and Products*  
<http://www.soundvision.com/parenting/index.shtml>

by the rightness or wrongness of their actions.<sup>319</sup> This belief along with the difficulty of performing certain Islamic practices had led to a shifting focus of the boundaries from protecting the purity of God to maintaining Muslim identity in an atmosphere of freedom. Practices such as ritual prayer and dietary laws are not as strictly observed. One Muslim youth interviewed by Barazingi made this comment on prayer, "Its hard to pray five times a day in front of others."<sup>320</sup> Second generation Muslims who do practice ritual prayer often make compromises and adjustments.

A Muslim soldier I talked with told me that if he washed his feet in the morning and did not take his boots off then he only had to wash his body parts and wipe his boots before prayer. There are two problems related to dietary laws. First It is difficult in the US to know what foods are haram. For example, many types of ice cream, biscuits, soups, meat pies, lunchmeat, Jell-O and gelatin, donuts, and marshmallows are haram because they are made from pork or they are cooked in lard.<sup>321</sup> The second is that halal food is often difficult to obtain. Muslim soldiers at FT Drum NY, wanting to buy halal food must travel two hours to Toronto Canada, which requires an out of country pass. If they can't get the pass then they must travel six hours to New York City. Imagine the difficulty of keeping a large quantity of meat from spoiling on a six hour trip in the

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<sup>319</sup> Barazingi, "Parents and Youth Perceiving and Practicing Islam in North America" 138-144.

<sup>320</sup> Barazingi, "Parents and Youth Perceiving and Practicing Islam in North America" 142.

<sup>321</sup> Ardavan, , *Growing Up Islam*, 43.

summer time. As a result of this difficulty many Muslims in America have chosen to define halal for themselves.<sup>322</sup>

The most openly violated Islamic dietary restriction in the United States is the use of alcohol. The second is the consumption of pork.<sup>323</sup> Only 7% of the Muslims interviewed by Haddad for *Islamic values in the United States* said they had eaten pork in the last month, one third said they had taken an alcoholic drink.<sup>324</sup> One Muslim interviewed by Lovell for his article "Islam in the United States: Past and Present," had listed pork and ham as his only dietary restrictions on a student form. When asked about alcohol he replied that it was "different."<sup>325</sup> Abstention from alcohol is difficult for American Muslims where drinking is an integral part of the social world and business life.<sup>326</sup> It has been my observation that the use of Alcohol is a common temptation in many cultures. I cannot remember visiting a Muslim in Bosnia, excluding religious leaders, who did not offer me a glass of plumb brandy. When asked why they were allowed to drink, the response was "we are European Muslims." I raised this issue in an interview with Muhamed ef. Lugavic, the Senior Imam in Tuzla, Bosnia. He said, "There are no European Muslims here, only good Muslims and bad Muslims. If you drink you are a bad Muslim."

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<sup>322</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *Competing Visions of Islam in the United States*, 62.

<sup>323</sup> Emily Kalled Lovell, "Islam in the United States: Past and Present," in *The Muslim Community in North America*, ed. Earl H. Waugh, Baha Abu-Laban, and Regula B. Qureshi (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Hignell Printing Ltd., 1983) 99.

<sup>324</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Islamic values in the United States: a comparative study* / ( New York : Oxford University Press, 1987), 117.

<sup>325</sup> Lovell "Islam in the United States, " 99.

The rearranging of boundaries by Muslims living in America is an excellent example of the cultural accommodation of boundaries. Even though many Muslims have adapted their boundaries to American culture, most Americans have not adapted their boundaries to accommodate Muslims. Muslims believe Americans still view them as out of place and that American society is working against them.<sup>327</sup> Even in the Princeton area where one would think that barriers of prejudice are more malleable I have heard several negative comments about so many of the gas stations being operated by Arabs. The tension between Muslims and the West is an excellent example of how boundaries impact cultural interaction. Boundary diagrams help to clarify these boundaries. Boundary diagrams are an excellent tool for soldiers preparing to cross cultural boundaries.

I would like to conclude this discussion on boundaries with an example of a successful cultural integration as a result of successfully blessing avenues of approach. The incident occurred in 1969 in the Sedelia Valley in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia where I grew up. Prior to 1969, I would compare the valley to a jelly filled donut. In 1970 Nolan Jackson, a wealthy businessman, bought four small farms in the center of our community, and turned them into a large Charolais ranch. There was now mold on the donut. Somehow those expensive French cattle didn't fit in with the Herefords and Jerseys we were used to seeing. Along with the cattle came a Ranch Manager from "up north" in Ohio. Just like

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<sup>326</sup> Haddad, *A Century of Islam in America*, 8.

<sup>327</sup> *Parents Manuel: A Guide For Muslim Parents Living in North America*, 3.

the donut our community formed boundaries around the mold in the middle. Our new neighbors were often referred to in the third person. Nolan Jackson was sensitive to the environment the ranch created. One of the reasons he chose charolais was because they would not compete with the local cattle market. He went out of his way to bless his new community. At the center of value boundaries for many of the local farmers was the local Baptist Church. Mr. Jackson made a generous monthly contribution thus blessing this cherished community institution. He hired local teenage boys to work on his ranch and invited the children in the community, who normally swam in local lakes and streams, to swim in his pool. Instead of a curse his presence became a blessing to the community. By blessing that which is valued in the inner boundaries of a society one's presence can change from a threat to a blessing.

## **B. Rituals**

The most important instrument of social control, within cultures is ritual. Rituals manipulate both interpersonal relationships between individuals and social groupings in relation to one another.<sup>328</sup> If I were to pick two areas of interaction where soldiers need to be the most cautious it would be when they cross cultural boundaries and when they are involved in rituals. The function of rituals often is to reinforce boundaries and empower the agents of social control. Rituals are speech acts that have the perlocutionary effect of blessing and cursing. Rituals do not require verbal language, but when words are used the

ritual environment affects the choice of language. Two good examples from American culture are the words “I do” in a marriage ritual and “To tell the whole truth so help me God” in the ritual of oath taking in a courtroom.<sup>329</sup> Ritual makes use of words in prayers, vows, recitations, speeches, songs, and word choice is considered by some to be the most critical element in rituals.<sup>330</sup> Just as language can be non-verbal, a ritual does not need words to be a speech act of blessing or cursing. The non-verbal expression of meaning found in rituals is stored in symbols.<sup>331</sup> A good example of this is the lighting of the unity candle in a wedding ceremony. I attended a wedding where the minister tried to explain this ritual. His commentary was distracting and made this ritual less meaningful. The perlocutionary impact which rituals have on those who participate and in some cases the observers make rituals powerful speech acts of blessing and cursing in any culture.

## 1. Categorizing Ritual

Ritual is extremely difficult to define and/or categorize. The categorizing of ritual including: secular / religious and political; private, civic / collective; universal / culturally specific; magical / technical, logical / emotional, causes the nature of the ritual activity to change or even be lost in its designation into a

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<sup>328</sup> Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan, 1975).61.

<sup>329</sup> Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1992),113.

<sup>330</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 112.

<sup>331</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 127.



particular category<sup>332</sup> To attempt to divide ritual into distinctive categories tends to override and undermine the indigenous distinctions within the world arena in which rituals exist.<sup>333</sup> This has led some observers to classify all activity as ritual, but this makes ritual a phenomenon that is so broad that it is impossible to organize. Catherine Bell suggests that rather than attempting to categorize ritual, that it is better to examine the circumstances and cultural strategies that generate and differentiate ritual activities. She uses the term ritualization to draw attention to the different ways certain social actions distinguish themselves. The roots of ritual are thus found in specific cultural strategies. Bell calls this "Practice Theory."<sup>334</sup> Bell describes her theory: "From this perspective one could not seek to construct a theory or model of ritual practice. Rather one could seek to construct a theory or model of the ritualized act by deconstructing some of the intricacies of its cultural logic."<sup>335</sup>

Practice theory sets certain criteria for the formation of ritual within a cultural context. Bell's criteria are as follows: 1) situational: it can only be completely grasped within a specific cultural context. 2) strategic: There is some scheme, tactic or strategy to accomplish some manipulative or expedient end. 3) misrecognition: There is an ambiguity between the action and the end result that cannot be theoretically reconstructed or explained. 4) redemptive hegemony: The motivational dynamics for the action includes synthesis of one's un-self-

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<sup>332</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 69.

<sup>333</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 70.

<sup>334</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 69-74.

<sup>335</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 80-81.

conscious awareness and experience of the world that gives one a sense of reality and identity and establishes moral order. We sometimes refer to this as “common sense.”<sup>336</sup> Using Bell’s criteria for the ritualization process is helpful in distinguishing between behavior that is ritual and behavior that is just different. For example buying socks for Physical Training (PT) is different from argyle socks bought for the ritual practice of giving gifts at Christmas. Ritual is more than just being different. Buying mismatched socks at a bargain table would be different but not a ritual.<sup>337</sup>

## **2. Power and ritual**

The legitimacy of power is closely interdependent upon ritual. Ritualization, according to Bell, is “a strategy for the construction of certain types of power relationships effective within particular social organizations.”<sup>338</sup> “...redemptive hegemony suggests that human practice is characterized by relations of dominance and subjection. These relations, however, are present in practice by means of the practical values, obligations, and persistent envisioning...of a state of prestige within this ordering of power.”<sup>339</sup> “...ritualization is a way of acting that specifically establishes a privileged contrast, differentiating itself as more important or powerful.”<sup>340</sup> Ritual can be

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<sup>336</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 81-84.

<sup>337</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 90-91.

<sup>338</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 197.

<sup>339</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 84.

<sup>340</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 90.

used to dominate by molding perceptions.<sup>341</sup> Bell relates the story of how the founder of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.- 221 A.D.) resisted the advice that he should follow the ritual of leaders to consult the Confucian books of ethics and ritual. He exclaimed, “Why should I now bother with those musty old texts. Your majesty, I have won it (the empire) on horseback.” His chief counselor replied, “but can you rule it on horseback.”<sup>342</sup>

According to Bell “Rituals do not function to regulate or control the systems of social relations, they are the systems.”<sup>343</sup> This is evident in the military Change of Command ceremony. Rituals are most effective in social structures like the military where there is a strong social hierarchy. They serve the purpose of legitimizing command and control. This is why in a change of command ceremony there is absolutely no question that the old commander is in command when the ceremony begins and that the new commander is in command when the ceremony ends. Everyone knows exactly what constitutes this transfer of authority. The transfer of power is conducted through unambiguous symbolism. When the outgoing commander passes to his successor the unit’s guidon, containing all the streamers of past accomplishments of the unit, he has relinquished command. When the new commander accepts the guidon from that same commander, then he is in command. It is also obvious that the new commander is under the authority of the higher-ranking commander who passed him the guidon.

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<sup>341</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 108.

<sup>342</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 193.

Notice the comparison to the transfer of leadership to the Ashanti King in Uganda described by Geoffrey Parrinder in his book *African Traditional Religions*: “Nobody can be proclaimed king unlawfully, nor without the Golden Stool which enshrines that soul of the nation. The rite of installation is private. The chief is taken to the stools of his ancestors. He is placed for a second upon the stool of his most renowned ancestor, and lifted up three times, thus he rules by virtue of his relationship with his ancestors. This invests his person with special sacredness,...”<sup>344</sup> The significance of the ancestors blessing will be discussed later, but one can see from these two examples the use of ritual to accomplish what could not be accomplished by any other means.

Relations or power are not just engendered from the top down but from the bottom up as well. The root of the constitution of power is still the individual. Submission to power is a choice.<sup>345</sup> People may give homage and even respect the presence of a leader without allowing his control to trickle down. The Pope was greeted with a fanfare of devotion when visiting the U. S. but most Catholics do not follow his policy of not using birth control.<sup>346</sup> Many priests in America defy the Pope’s authority in relation to this issue. While serving as a pastor in a church near Sacramento, California, I befriended the local Catholic priest. He shared with me over a cup of coffee; “when a couple comes to me and

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<sup>343</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 130.

<sup>344</sup> Geoffrey Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion* (New York: Hutchinson’s House, 1954), 74.

<sup>345</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 200-203.

<sup>346</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 212.

they already have several children and I know they can't afford anymore I tell them to use birth control." Douglas explains that "beliefs are the product of common assent to a set of social norms."<sup>347</sup> If people are not committed to a certain behavior code they will not take the beliefs that govern that code seriously. Even though the beliefs of a particular religion may seem instituted this does not ensure that those beliefs are practiced by a particular culture which practices that religion.

"No one is going to be able to foist his private anxieties on the community unless they correspond to everyone's private anxieties, arising out of a common situation."<sup>348</sup> "A public ritual is ... the summary of a whole community's experience. It expresses a common, public concern, and uses whatever the symbolic language is at hand for bringing the point home."<sup>349</sup> There is the need for at least the allusion of consensus among the participants which can be gained through stressing personal advantages to be held or the cost to be incurred by not consenting.<sup>350</sup> Adolph Hitler used poor economic conditions and the private anxieties of Germans concerning Jews to seize power. Afterwards many followed him after weighing the cost that might be incurred. I was living in Austria the day the mini series *Holocaust* was aired in that country for the first time. The first evening it was aired, I was the dinner guest of an English lady in my church and her Austrian husband. As we were eating the movie became a topic

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<sup>347</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 63.

<sup>348</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 67.

<sup>349</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 67.

<sup>350</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 210-211.

of discussion. In the course of the conversation I realized that Herr Knecketle was not discussing the movie, but rather confessing his own personal involvement. Sensing my shock he looked at me and stated, "If I had not done the things I was told to do those things would have been done to my family. I felt like the Christian thing to do was to protect my family." He went on to explain that if his parents said anything critical concerning Hitler or the NAZI party that it had to be done in a whisper in their bedroom as children were regularly probed by teachers for information that could be used to arrest their parents. In circumstances such as these, weighing the costs that incurred can be a powerful motivation for social conformity.

For those using cohesion as a means to achieving conformity ethics and methodology is secondary to what they see as a nobler goal such as ethnic or theological purity. They feel a necessity to purge their culture from those who disagreed with their worldview. Leaders conducting the ritual of cleansing, whether it be those cleansing Jews in Germany, Huguenots in France, or Muslims in Bosnia, do not perceive their actions as wrong, but rather see themselves as champions of justice and righteousness. Their ethical standards become clouded in a religious and/or nationalistic cover.<sup>351</sup> Ritual sees the problem to which the ritual is responding. It sees the end or the rectification of the problem. It does not see how it produces this effect or projects that result.<sup>352</sup> When interacting with other cultures, soldiers need to determine as much as

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<sup>351</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 50.

<sup>352</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 109-110.

possible, the means by which leaders maintain control. How much credibility do followers give to leaders? What are the potential consequences if one shows resistance to the leader?

Just as ritual enhances the power of leaders, it also enhances the power of God. By evoking the power of God, rituals can maintain a certain position without using military or economic force.<sup>353</sup> Ritual enhances God's glory and power. As ritual declines, God becomes more personal at the expense of the ritual.<sup>354</sup> An interesting phenomenon has occurred in many evangelical churches in relation to ritual. These churches have traditionally avoided the ritual elements which function to enhance God's power in liturgical churches. In the past twenty-five years, Evangelical churches have developed their own ritual use of praise music which serves the same function. The rejection of old rituals as meaningless gives way to forming new rituals or symbols to prevent chaos.<sup>355</sup>

Before leaving this discussion, it is important to mention the significance of divine power. Many theories and observations of ritual behavior omit the possibility of divine blessing. Many cultures believe God is capable of transforming one's state of existence to a higher level, thus blessing the life of the individual. Bell acknowledges Emile Durkheim's premise that a believer who has communicated with God is stronger because this act is the very definition of

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<sup>353</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 116.

<sup>354</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 32.

<sup>355</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 40.

power.<sup>356</sup> Nicholas Stamdeart, a scholar of religion in China, points out that this transforming power, which is mediated through ritual, is what draws Chinese to a religion. They will accept the ritual that works where they receive a blessing. According to Stamdeart, when rituals work people unite around them and build community.<sup>357</sup> For God's blessing in many religions, is the highest recognition and a powerful source of motivation for followers.

### **3. Tradition in Ritual**

Tradition exists because it is constantly produced and reproduced through ritual.<sup>358</sup> All rituals contain fixed traditions that are difficult to change. There are always certain aspects of tradition which are present in the ritual. There are also "indexical" elements that are shaped by the current context.<sup>359</sup> The military change of command ceremony is a good example of this. The vast majority of the ceremony is in a traditional format that has been passed down for centuries. But some parts, such as the outgoing commander's remarks will vary depending on the experiences and accomplishments of the unit under his command.

### **4.The Function of Ritual as an Agent of Social Control.**

Rituals impose conformity whether participants hold the belief

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<sup>356</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 218.

<sup>357</sup> Stamdeart, "Reflections on the Handbook of Christianity in China"

<sup>358</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 123.

<sup>359</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 119-120.



system of the organization or not.<sup>360</sup> Rituals accomplish this by bringing ideology to life, combining “ethos and worldview.” “Worldview” is a persons sense of what is real. “Ethos” is the aspect of ritual that is the underlying attitude or ideal persons in a culture have toward them selves and the world.<sup>361</sup> Clifford Geertz explains the process in which ritual brings ideology to life. “In ritual the world as lived and the world as imagined, fused under the agency of a single set of symbolic forms, turn out to be the same world...transforming one’s sense of reality....”<sup>362</sup> These symbolic forms are accepted blocks of tradition that generate a sense of cultural continuity, which is juxtaposed to define a unique ritual ethos.<sup>363</sup> Greetz describes this process as it pertains to the formation of religious belief. “Religious belief and ritual confront and mutually confirm one another; the ethos is made intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life implied by the actual state of affairs which the worldview describes, and the worldview is made emotionally acceptable by being presented as an image of actual state of affairs of which such a way of life is an authentic expression.”<sup>364</sup> Ritual thus, gives genuineness and validity to sacred behavior.<sup>365</sup> For the participants the ritual is not only the model for what they believe but also the model for believing it.<sup>366</sup> When the members of a culture hold certain religious ideologies to be sure and true their allegiance to those ideologies

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<sup>360</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 184.

<sup>361</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 26-33.

<sup>362</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 112.

<sup>363</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 195.

<sup>364</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 127.

<sup>365</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 112.

<sup>366</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 114.

becomes a potent force.<sup>367</sup> Particular authorities in a culture act as the sole guardians of the past and become the experts on ritual.<sup>368</sup> If worldview is changed by a rapid change in society this is likely to influence the understanding of worldview to the extent that the ritual loses its meaning. Rituals are a means of resolving conflict between the dichotomy of ethos and worldview. When the worldview invalidates the ritual, the conflict is no longer resolved and therefore reemerges.<sup>369</sup> The resultant cognitive dissonance threatens those for which ritual holds sacred meaning. They resist rapid change. This resistance produces conflict between those who are attracted by the new worldview and those who are emotionally bound to the worldview prescribed by their rituals.

It is common, following rapid change, for new rituals to emerge which reinforce the values which appear to be threatened. It was in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as the United States was receiving a large number of immigrants that rituals began to distinguish one as a good American. These rituals, such as school children reciting the pledge of allegiance, formed the basis for defining American and un-American behavior, a distinction between us and them.<sup>370</sup> Likewise, the loss of a ritual due to rapid change may leave a deep emotional wound as well as loss of status for those who have been the guardians and/or benefactors of the ritual. In the School system, in which I grew up, it was common for the teacher or a student to lead in prayer following the pledge of

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<sup>367</sup> Bloch, *Ritual, history, and power*, 127-128.

<sup>368</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 123.

<sup>369</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 35.

<sup>370</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 122.

allegiance. The elimination of this ritual, has had a tremendous impact on the psyche of many Southern whites. When a culture is forced to discontinue a ritual, conflict is likely. In the Bible belt there is very little support that eliminating prayer is right. Free exercise of religion in this environment is the right to pray. It is my opinion that much of the success of the religious right in the South has been with those who were wounded by the changes that occurred in the South in the late 1960s. Much of the rhetoric is about restoring traditional values, of which public community prayer is one of the most cherished.

## **5. Two Examples of Ritual and Social Control.**

I confronted the power of ritual in 1980 when I moved from Virginia to California to attend Golden Gate Seminary. I was hired as Youth Director of First Southern Baptist Church in Ceres, California. The religious rituals I had been exposed to as a student at the University of Richmond and as a missionary in Austria was quite different from those in this conservative Southern Baptist Church in the Central Valley of California. Even though I was Southern Baptist, some of the rituals in this church were different from those I was accustomed to. One Sunday when I arrived at the church, the pastor asked to speak with me in his study. From the tone of his voice I could tell something was wrong. The previous Sunday I had led the congregational prayer during the worship service. I had not closed the prayer by saying the words, "In Jesus' Name." The perlocutionary effect was a curse.

To perform incorrectly or leave out those essential elements in a ritual can change the perlocutionary impact of the ritual for the participants. Navaho Indians fear the consequences of a mistake in performing a ritual ceremony as we would the consequences of committing murder. From their perspective mistakes while performing a ritual can cause the death of a child or some other tragedy.<sup>371</sup> In the religious culture of First Southern Baptist Ceres it was the utterance of the words “in Jesus’ Name,” that made this ritual (the congregational prayer) a blessing. It is interesting that for church deacons, it was not the content of the prayer, but the use of this closing phrase that was of primary importance. Bell points that in some cultures, “words themselves are deeds that accomplish things.”<sup>372</sup> This appeared to be the belief among the deacons, who were the guardians of tradition in this church. One can see from this example the potential landmine/minds that are contained in ritual. One can easily set off a landmine/mind unaware that they touched a trip wire.

This story illustrates another characteristic of rituals. They are not static. Rituals evolve over time and may change from one geographic location to another.<sup>373</sup> Even though I was of the same religious denomination, I was an outsider, not yet assimilated into the boundaries of this congregation. As stated earlier, rituals reinforce boundaries. Because I came from outside of their boundaries my failure to follow the prescribed ritual that enforced their

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<sup>371</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 30-31.

<sup>372</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 111.

boundaries of this congregation made me suspect. The decision of what is evil and what to do about it is closely connected to power structures within a culture.

<sup>374</sup> The deacons had approached the pastor that week. It is evident from their response how boundaries protect power and how rituals reinforce those boundaries.

Mary Douglas points out the close association between ritual and the need to manipulate bodily functions. There are basic principles that underlie all rituals. 1) Rituals select some bodily conditions and ignore others. 2) Some members of the group try to manipulate the bodily functions of other people.<sup>375</sup> In this circumstance the bodily function was speech. The object of power is the control of the body, power can hold it, direct it, train it, mark it, invest it, force it to carry out task, or torture it if it does not comply.<sup>376</sup> Rather than explaining to this congregation my theological understanding of what it meant to pray “in Jesus’ Name,” it became clear in my conversation with the pastor that I would be expected to follow their ritual. What I discovered was that ending the prayer, “in Jesus’ Name” was one of many code words that allied one with a particular theological position. Their interpretation of John 14:13: “And I will do whatever you ask in my name,” was understood literally not through the theological implications of Jesus statement. Ending prayers “in Jesus’ Name” was one of many code words that supported their understanding of scripture. My theological

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<sup>373</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 124.

<sup>374</sup> Ronald Inden, “Hindu evil as an unconquered Lower Self,” in *The Anthropology of Evil*, ed David Parkin (New York: Basal Blackwood Ltd., 1985). 143.

<sup>375</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 61.

explanation for praying “in Jesus’ Name,” would have been a threat to these deacon’s theological understanding of the Bible. Soldiers need to understand that if they challenge any of the internal boundaries which protect a culture, they threaten the entire protective system. Though not stated by the pastor, it was evident that to continue as youth minister I would need to conform to their ritual. My willingness to end my prayers “in Jesus’ Name” allowed me some accommodation within the boundaries of First Southern Baptist Church.

The members of the congregation who had talked with the pastor after my failure to follow their ritual were unaware of these boundaries and would have deplored defining the congregational prayer as a ritual. Examination reveals, however that this ritual meets all of Bell’s criteria. Bell points out that, “Ritualized agents do not see themselves as projecting schemes; they see themselves as only acting in a socially instinctive response to how things are.”<sup>377</sup> They would however, have been appalled had the pastor chosen to eliminate the congregational prayer as a solution to the tension my actions had caused. The only possible resolve, from their perspective, was for me to perform the ritual.

This pressure for social conformity is evident in the Hindu ritual of sati where the wife mounts the funeral pyre and is burned alive with the body of her deceased husband. Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, in her book *Ashes of Immortality* comments on the contrast in how this ritual is perceived by the

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<sup>376</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 202.

<sup>377</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 206.

Western observer and how it is perceived in the context of Hindu social control.

“These things shock us. “They (acts of sati) fill us with indignation and horror. Yet Indian tradition exalts them and the Hindu orthodoxy holds them to be eminently prestigious, nay, one of the defining features of its identity.”<sup>378</sup> The practice of sati is a custom that is a touchstone in the doctrinal practice of Hinduism.<sup>379</sup>

A close examination reveals that ritual serves two primary functions: 1) to solve what is perceived as a “social problem,” being a widow; 2) to reinforce the boundaries of sexual purity. To the outside observer it has the obvious perlocutionary effect of a curse. But social control converts the perlocutionary impact into a blessing. Weinberger-Thomas describes the social bond of control in Hindu culture that becomes the basis for sati: “...between a widow and her husband, a client and his patron, and a servant and his prince the relationship of dependence is so close and the very idea of separation so unthinkable that fate of the one must necessarily be bound to that of the other.”<sup>380</sup> This devotion is evident in this statement by an Hindu woman whom, Major-General Sir W. H. Sleeman, a British Official in India, tried to prevent from self emulation. “My soul is with Ummed Singh Upadhya (her husband), and my ashes must here mix with his.”<sup>381</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India*, 1.

<sup>379</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India*, 198.

<sup>380</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India*, 86.

<sup>381</sup> W.H. Major General Sir, Sleeman, *Rambles and Reflections of an Indian Official* (1893 edition, Constable) in *Suttee; A Historical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow-burning* by Thompson, Edward, (London: G. Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1928), 154.

The term sati actually means “a virtuous wife.”<sup>382</sup> Rather than being viewed as a perversion, the idea of sati is embedded into the very ideology of marriage. This is evident in the wedding ritual of the Bundeikhandis in India. The bride and groom visit a sati temple and make a vow to stay together for all eternity.<sup>383</sup> The sati ritual is a mirror image of the marriage ceremony.<sup>384</sup> The wife wears her bridal veil and circles the pyre seven times just as the couple circles a fire seven times during the wedding ceremony.

At its core sati is a curse for being a woman. The Hindu Atharva Veda links the woman to original sin. As in many cultures, menstruating women are considered unclean. Stressing the impurity of menstruation is a means of asserting the superiority of males.<sup>385</sup> In India the menstrual cycle is indication of a permanent curse upon the status of women.<sup>386</sup> In Hindu belief “Any woman can be fatal to the man who unites with her.”<sup>387</sup> The death of the husband is interpreted as the manifest sign of the sins of the wife. She is assumed to have failed in her wifely duty or seriously violated her “conjugal vow.” The gravity of the guilt is inversely proportional to her age: the younger the widow the greater the guilt.<sup>388</sup> This was evident in the reaction In July 1979 when Javitri Kant informed her in-laws of the tragic death of her husband. She was consoled, “with a volley of curses: it was she who was the guilty one, and she who had cast

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<sup>382</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* p 11.

<sup>383</sup> Mishra, Subhash, “Medieval Madness” *India Today*, 29 November 1999, 61.

<sup>384</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* 217.

<sup>385</sup> Douglas / *Meaning / Ritual* p 62

<sup>386</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* 149.

<sup>387</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* 148.

<sup>388</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India* 45.



a spell on her husband's family line." Her only recourse to rectify her transgression was to become a sati.<sup>389</sup> Before mounting the funeral pyre the sati lets down her hair: an act usually done only before having sex and never done in public. Hair is believed to be a haunt for sin. This is why it is bound up on the female's head. By letting her hair down the sati exhibits a visual symbol of impurity that is equivalent to that of menstruation, childbirth and intercourse.<sup>390</sup> In Hinduism evil and distress are explained, and in the case of sati overcome, through rebirth. Through sati the wife is purifying her sin and curing her suffering.<sup>391</sup>

The function of sacrifice is to make guilt bearable. Most societies have such a device for dealing with guilt. But this is not the only function of sacrifice.<sup>392</sup> In the book *Prey Into Hunter*, Maurice Bloch gives an example from Greek mythology where Euripides, offers to sacrifice of his daughter (extension of himself) as prey, but a hind intervenes and is killed instead. He eats flesh of the hind and is renewed to conquer enemies.<sup>393</sup> Bloch describes this "prey into hunter" as a repeated ritual in many cultures.

This concept is certainly prevalent in Hindu culture. Catherine Weinberger-Thomas explains in her book *Ashes of Immortality*: "Like semen or saliva, blood is an imminently impure substance (according to the Indian

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<sup>389</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India*, 108.

<sup>390</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India*, 143.

<sup>391</sup> Inden, "Hindu evil as an unconquered Lower Self," 153

<sup>392</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 15.

Sanskrit document Manusmṛti, 5,135, menstrual blood heads up this negative hierarchy). But for the very same reasons that it has a dangerous and polluting valence, blood can become an inexhaustible source of “powers.”<sup>394</sup> According to *Revue de l’histoire des religions* 211 no. 4 (1994): 443-62, by drinking a mixture of menstrual blood mixed with semen obtained in a ritual copulation, the participant absorbs miraculous powers.<sup>395</sup> By immolating herself the widow is rejuvenated in a divine state more powerful than her previous existence. Bloch believes that “prey into hunter” is the root of sacrifice, spirit possession, festivity rituals and funerals.<sup>396</sup> Christianity contains the concept of “prey to hunter;” The process of death and rebirth are symbolized in Eucharist ritual. We eat Jesus flesh and are reborn. Another motivation for sacrifice is that, if God is responsible for disaster and good fortune, then he must be placated.<sup>397</sup> Satisfying the thirst of the Gods by means of sacrifice is a common practice in Hinduism. Usually it is the sacrifice of an animal that takes on the corporate sins of the group. In the case of the sati she atones for her sin by immolating her own body. This is an acceptable Hindu practice. A person who had committed a hideous crime like incest or the breaking of a vow could go to a temple and be cleansed through the act of self sacrifice. This is not considered suicide, which for Hindus is an odious sin. The sacrificial killing of one’s self is a direct path to liberation.<sup>398</sup> One can certainly speculate on the social advantage to persons in

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<sup>393</sup> Bloch, *Prey Into Hunter*, 26.

<sup>394</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 66

<sup>395</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 66.

<sup>396</sup> Bloch, *Prey Into Hunter*, 11.

<sup>397</sup> Moore, *Moral Purity and Persecution in History*, 16.

<sup>398</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 76-77.

Hindu society who have committed deviant behavior removing themselves from society in this manner.

The deeper issue and the boundary which sati protects is sexual purity. One of the common functions of ritual practices is to lay claim to a special relationship, the most common of which is sexual access.<sup>399</sup> In the Hindu concept of “virtuous wife,” sexual purity is essential. Any momentary sexual pleasure that distracts the wife’s mind results in impurity.<sup>400</sup> The death of the husband is ascribed to infidelity by the wife if not in this life then in a previous life: by dying on the pyre, the widow theoretically expiates her crime.”<sup>401</sup> The fire purifies her infidelity and transforms her into a goddess. In Hinduism the role of ritual and copious polytheism results in a worldview that blurs the lines in defining what is real.<sup>402</sup> Hindu observers do not see a woman burning, but rather the consumption of divine energy.<sup>403</sup>

As a widow the potential for sexual contamination becomes an even greater risk. In some Hindu cultures widows are referred to as whores.<sup>404</sup> This belief is not unique to Hindu culture. In a Bali dance the witch is depicted as an old widow, prostitute, and eater of infants.<sup>405</sup> The stigma of being a widow intensifies the social pressure for the Hindu widow to commit sati. Reporting on

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<sup>399</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 63.

<sup>400</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 46-47.

<sup>401</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 86.

<sup>402</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 40.

<sup>403</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 144.

<sup>404</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 147.

<sup>405</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 114.

a sati which occurred in November, 1999, Subhash Mishra, a reporter for *India Today*, wrote, "Being a widow is disgraced while sati culture is glorified."<sup>406</sup> If she remains a widow she is no longer treated as a human being. She curses anyone she touches or possibly even looks at. Life itself becomes a burden.<sup>407</sup> Women whose husbands are alive must avoid all contact with a widow, lest they be exposed to her plague. Widows cannot go in public even to attend the wedding of their own children.<sup>408</sup> A woman Rajasthan, where the act of sati is most prevalent, when asked why one would become a sati replied, "Out of love. Without a husband a woman is nothing."<sup>409</sup> Pressure for a widow to declare herself a sati is exerted by family, one's social group and Brahman, the latter of which will profit from conducting the sati.<sup>410</sup> Ritual provides a means of community order that is extremely powerful and effective.<sup>411</sup>

Gagi Parsai, another reporter from *The Hindu* investigating the 1999 sati states, "Religious folklore and myths built around such incidents have influenced the psyche of the women who are mostly illiterate and steeped in superstition and outdated practices."<sup>412</sup> Once a woman has indicated that she plans to be a sati, the social pressure becomes overwhelming. Ann Chaffin, a Baptist missionary, who was witness to a sati in 1814, describes this social pressure. "I heard that when the resolve has been once made in the presence of any

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<sup>406</sup> Mishra, Subhash, "Medieval Madness" *India Today*, 29 November 1999, 60.

<sup>407</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 108.

<sup>408</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 146.

<sup>409</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 170.

<sup>410</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 108.

<sup>411</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 116.

<sup>412</sup> Paesai, Gargi "Fudal Embers Still Smouldering," *The Hindu*, 21 November 1999.

witnesses, it is impossible for the women to retract even if she wished it ever so much, it being as they say given to God, and they all cast her out, and will not eat or work with her, nor will her relations take any notice of her, so that she is looked on as quite outcast and vagabond all her days.”<sup>413</sup>

The widow receives as much pressure from her own family as she does from the family of her husband. According to Chaffin the greatest concern of the sati's mother was that her daughter might lose her resolve.<sup>414</sup> The response of the community is enthusiastic approval. In 1987 when eighteen-year-old Roop Kanwar was forced by her in-laws to burn alive with her husband, a frenzied mob surrounded the pyre and applauded.<sup>415</sup> Friends and neighbors who observe satis depart with an appearance of uncommon gaiety including family members who could not appear happier.<sup>416</sup> As reported by Subhash Mishra, “What is amazing is that even educated people in the region find nothing wrong with such customs.”

The women themselves often seem to welcome this lethal ritual. Most women face this ritual without the slightest observable sense of fear, but rather ecstatic anticipation.<sup>417</sup> One of the ways that satis reinforce their resolve is to break their family bracelets. According to Sleeman, By breaking her bracelets

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<sup>413</sup> Ann Chaffin, *Ann Chaffin's Suttee Story* 1814, Baptist Mission Achieves Sarnapore Mission Compound, Calcutta, India.

<sup>414</sup> Chaffin, *Ann Chaffin's Suttee Story* 1814

<sup>415</sup> Mishra, Subhash, “Medieval Madness” *India Today*, 29 November 1999, 60.

<sup>416</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 11.

<sup>417</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 9.

the sati becomes legally dead. “Should she choose to live after this, she could never return to her family.”<sup>418</sup> Through this ritual of voluntary death the wife earns immortality. The sati not only immortalizes herself, the distinct impression is that her husband is immortalized into the body of the sati.<sup>419</sup> Once immortalized, sati’s reveal themselves in dreams, can bestow blessings or pronounce curses, provoke earthquakes, and bring sickness, sterility, and adversity. Sati’s are worshiped in vigils, visited on pilgrimages, and glorified in songs.<sup>420</sup> “...’Sati-hood is viewed as the mark of a woman’s sacredness, rather than of her subordination.”<sup>421</sup>

The tie between Sati and social control has emerged as a political issue in the current power struggle between local governments who turn their head to the practice of sati, and the Indian government, which, in compliance with Western disdain for the practice, has made sati illegal. In this conflict some view the sati as an emblem of Hindu nationalism. Some view the ban on sati as an attack on Hindu values and a suppression of local autonomy.<sup>422</sup> A class on Hinduism at Princeton Theological Seminary taught by Dr. Richard Young viewed a movie documenting one of these anti government rallies. The participants became quite emotional in their defense of sati. Rituals arouse emotions and attach those emotions to accepted social values.<sup>423</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Sleeman, *Rambles and Reflections of an Indian Official*

<sup>419</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 81.

<sup>420</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 188.

<sup>421</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 168.

<sup>422</sup> Weinberger-Thomas, *Ashes of Immortality*, 128.

<sup>423</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 65.

Sati is a vivid example of the power of ritual to reinforce the social control that is held within cultural boundaries. Imagine the perocutionary impact of a soldier believing he is doing the right thing by rescuing an Indian woman from the flames of a funeral pyre. Soldiers need to be cautious about interfering with rituals, not allowing rituals to be practiced, or trying to change the content of rituals. Rituals are potential mine/mind fields.

## **6. What Observers can Learn from Ritual**

When soldiers enter another culture they will not hold the same perspective of a ritual as the participants.<sup>424</sup> Being detached from the ritual allows the beholder to observe important PIRs that may provide important information about a particular culture. For example, ritual reveals the extent of social control. When a local group grips its members in tight bonds, the religion is ritualistic. When the grip is relaxed in the emphasis of ritual it declines.<sup>425</sup> Another indicator of structure is that in loosely structured groups performing rituals enthusiastically with more fervor is more important. In more tightly structured groups performing rituals correctly is most important. This does not necessarily mean that the leader has total control even in a tightly structured group. When examining ritual, soldiers need to look for these PIRs. Are women included in the ritual? Are they victims of the ritual as in the ritual of sati? A

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<sup>424</sup> Geertz., *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 113.

<sup>425</sup> Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 32.

central concern in the interpretation of ritual, is the relation between individual psychological needs and public social needs. Both are expressed in symbolic ritual acts.<sup>426</sup> Another important question in attempting to analyze ritual is why rituals are considered an appropriate behavior.<sup>427</sup> An observer cannot assimilate all of the information provided through ritual, but the astute observer can gain a great deal of knowledge from observing rituals, which can be used to identify perceived blessings. Blessings are avenues of approach. It is important that soldiers respect rituals and avoid the potential landmines/minds contained within.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The best conclusion for this study is not found on the pages of this document, but rather in the classes I will be teaching at John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center. This study will conclude; when it provides successful avenues of approach for soldiers entering cultural boundaries; when soldiers are able to avoid cultural landmine/minds; when soldiers complete successful missions, and when cultural conflict is minimized. This study is only the introduction for the task that lies ahead. It provides the framework on which to continue to build through further study, to provide students with the best information possible for successful cross-cultural missions.

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<sup>426</sup> Douglas, *Implicit Meanings*, 66.

<sup>427</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 115.



Certainly the outcome of these missions is critically important. Equally important is the opportunity this teaching assignment provides to interact with soldiers from the United States and other Armed Forces from all over the world that send soldiers to attend this training. It is my desire is not just to be an instructor, but also to minister to these soldiers as their chaplain, and ministry is... blessing.

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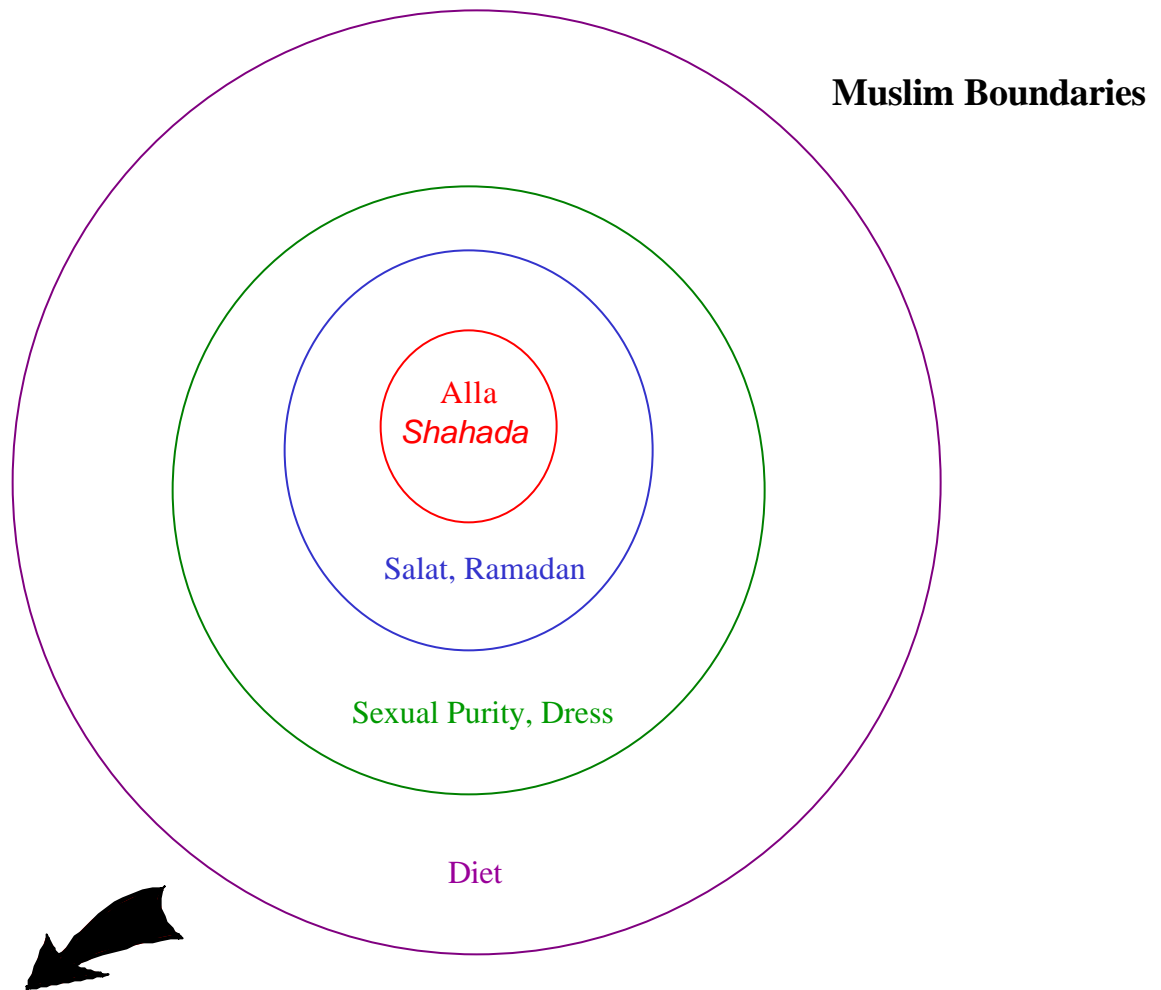
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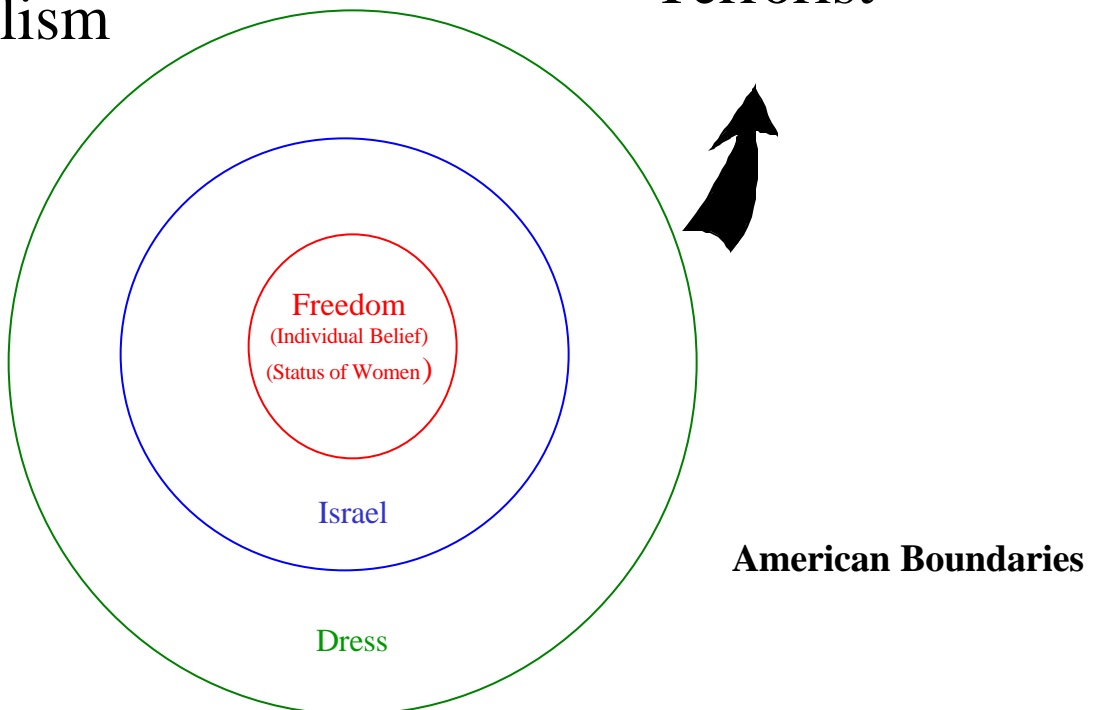
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Immorality  
Materialism

**EVIL**

Terrorist



## Boundaries of Second Generation Muslims

